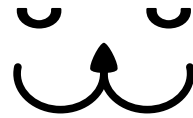


**BARNAHUS**



## **BARNAHUS SCALING TOOLKIT**

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# Introduction

Scaling Barnahus is not only a question of opening more locations. It is a question of maintaining a child-centred, multidisciplinary and interagency response as the service moves across legal systems, geographies, agencies, and levels of government. The tools in this workbook are designed to help teams clarify what must remain consistent, what can adapt locally, and what support, governance, and institutional commitment are needed for sustainable implementation.

In most countries, scaling will begin from at least one existing Barnahus and move into new places or communities within the same legal system. Before expanding, stakeholders should work together to identify what must remain consistent, and what may adapt to local resources, competence, and communities. Children should participate in these decisions. Their views should also be taken into account when reviewing how scaling affects their experience.

This toolkit is developed on the basis of a master class training delivered by [Spring Impact](#) to the Barnahus Network in May 2026. It includes tools and resources that were annexed as part of the training presentations, which have been adapted specifically for Barnahus use. It also includes new tools that have been developed based on the experience and lessons learned that were discussed in the training.

Teams are encouraged to carefully adapt each tool to their national context, especially the applicable legal frameworks.

## Key themes

1. **Scale behaviours, not just structures.** You can replicate governance agreements, protocols, and physical spaces. But are professionals actually working differently together, or just co-located? As one participant put it: *“Everyone was following the protocol. But nobody was actually working together.”*
2. **Heros get you started. Systems keep you going.** Early momentum depends on committed champions, but the long-term challenge is making the service survive beyond them.
3. **The best sign you’re getting close to scale isn’t enthusiasm. It’s friction.** Finance departments asking difficult questions. Legal teams pushing back. That’s the moment government stops admiring Barnahus and starts trying to absorb what it means to work in the Barnahus way.

① **TIP! View all videos in one playlist:**

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTxJ19fWo7ik>

① **TIP! Access Word versions of the templates provided in this toolkit:**

<https://go.barnahus.eu/ScalingTemplates>

# What does it mean to scale Barnahus?

## Watch: Understanding scaling with impact

<https://youtu.be/MBWHX8yY3Yw>

**TIP! View all videos in one playlist:** <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTxJ19fWo7ik>

Scaling is not the same as growth. In this clip, Gabriel Lester, Spring Impact, explains that growth means increasing impact by adding resources at roughly the same rate, while scale means increasing impact faster than the resources invested.

For Barnahus, this distinction matters because the goal is not simply to create more activity, more services, or more sites. The larger question is how Barnahus can help close the gap between the scale of violence against children and the solutions available to respond to it.

The clip also introduces three ways of thinking about scale: scaling wide to reach more children, scaling up to influence law, policy and funding, and scaling deep to shift practice, culture, equity and relationships. It frames scaling as a strategic choice: different countries and organisations may be trying to make different contributions to the same wider goal.

# Who needs to be involved?

## Watch: Roles and responsibilities

<https://youtu.be/f2viYNWi7-k>

**TIP! View all videos in one playlist:** <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTxJ19fWo7ik>

Roles change as Barnahus moves from pilot activity towards institutionalisation. Clarifying long-term ownership early can help teams decide which partners need to be involved now, even when working with them is slower or more difficult in the short term.

In this clip, Nora Dettor, Spring Impact, explains that many quality and consistency challenges do not arise because partners lack commitment, but because expectations about roles and responsibilities have not been made explicit. She further explains that scaling Barnahus depends on many actors doing different things well, over time.

The clip introduces a roles and responsibilities matrix as a practical way to surface gaps, overlaps and assumptions between partners. It can be used to map how responsibilities work now, and then again to map how they would need to work at scale.

## Tool: Partner profile and readiness tool

 Tip: A helpful partner assessment tool for identifying their readiness to contribute to Barnahus.

 Extra Resource: Go deeper using the Spring Impact [scale tools](#).

| Categories                        | Essential Criteria                                                                                                    | Desirable criteria | Notes |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Type of organisation <sup>1</sup> |                                                                                                                       |                    |       |
| Mandate                           | Does the partner have a formal role in responding to child victims or witnesses of violence?                          |                    |       |
| Capacity                          | Does the partner have staff, time, competence, and management support to fulfil its role?                             |                    |       |
| Authority and influence           | Can the partner make or influence decisions needed for referral, assessment, investigation, treatment, or protection? |                    |       |
| Commitment                        | Is there visible commitment beyond one individual representative?                                                     |                    |       |

---

<sup>1</sup> Examples: Child protection / social welfare authority; Police or investigative authority; Prosecutor / justice authority; judiciary or court administration, where relevant; Medical / paediatric service; Mental health or therapeutic support service; Local municipality or regional authority; National ministry or agency; NGO or civil society provider; Specialist provider for children with disabilities, communication needs, or minority language needs; Data, research, or evaluation partner.

| Categories                        | Essential Criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Desirable criteria | Notes |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Experience and quality            | Can the partner meet agreed standards for timeliness, training, documentation, confidentiality, and safeguarding?                                                                                                                                                          |                    |       |
| Fit                               | Are there legal, confidentiality, procedural, or evidentiary constraints that need to be resolved?                                                                                                                                                                         |                    |       |
| Location and geographical spread  | Can the partner contribute to equitable access for children in rural, remote, or underserved areas?                                                                                                                                                                        |                    |       |
| Values and approach               | <p>Does the partner accept the principle that processes should be organised around the child's needs and rights, not only agency convenience?</p> <p>Is the partner willing and able to participate in shared case planning, information sharing, and agreed routines?</p> |                    |       |
| Sustainability                    | Is there a realistic route to continued involvement beyond a pilot or project period?                                                                                                                                                                                      |                    |       |
| Facilities, equipment, technology |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                    |       |
| Finances                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                    |       |
| Other                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                    |       |

## Tool: Roles and responsibilities matrix

💡 Tip: Co-create, anchor and revisit these roles with partners to ensure commitment and alignment. If the same task is marked under several agencies, use the discussion to clarify whether this is shared responsibility or unclear responsibility. Barnahus cooperation often depends on several agencies acting together, but children benefit when accountability is explicit.

🔍 Extra Resource: Go deeper using the Spring Impact [scale tools](#).

| Area                                       | Barnahus lead / coordinator | Child protection | Criminal justice | Physical health | Mental Health | (Insert more columns as needed) |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| Name(s) of organisation                    |                             |                  |                  |                 |               |                                 |
| Core delivery                              |                             |                  |                  |                 |               |                                 |
| Referral and entry criteria                |                             |                  |                  |                 |               |                                 |
| Interagency case planning and management   |                             |                  |                  |                 |               |                                 |
| Management: core delivery and coordination |                             |                  |                  |                 |               |                                 |
| Management: policy and political level     |                             |                  |                  |                 |               |                                 |
| Service development and learning           |                             |                  |                  |                 |               |                                 |

| <b>Area</b>                            | <b>Barnahus lead / coordinator</b> | <b>Child protection</b> | <b>Criminal justice</b> | <b>Physical health</b> | <b>Mental Health</b> | <i>(Insert more columns as needed)</i> |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Interagency case management            |                                    |                         |                         |                        |                      |                                        |
| Training and capacity building         |                                    |                         |                         |                        |                      |                                        |
| Quality assurance and monitoring       |                                    |                         |                         |                        |                      |                                        |
| Funding and resourcing                 |                                    |                         |                         |                        |                      |                                        |
| Advocacy and policy influence          |                                    |                         |                         |                        |                      |                                        |
| Legal and regulatory framework         |                                    |                         |                         |                        |                      |                                        |
| Victim support                         |                                    |                         |                         |                        |                      |                                        |
| Child liaison                          |                                    |                         |                         |                        |                      |                                        |
| Child participation                    |                                    |                         |                         |                        |                      |                                        |
| Child safeguarding                     |                                    |                         |                         |                        |                      |                                        |
| Budget                                 |                                    |                         |                         |                        |                      |                                        |
| <i>(add additional rows as needed)</i> |                                    |                         |                         |                        |                      |                                        |

# How do you reduce reliance on individual champions?

## Watch: From individual champions to institutional commitment

<https://youtu.be/asFs51viS6s>

**TIP! View all videos in one playlist:** <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTxJ19fWo7ik>

Individual champions are often essential to getting Barnahus started, but they are not enough to sustain it. In this clip, Nora Dettor, Spring Impact, explains why progress becomes vulnerable when it depends too heavily on individual people: a committed official, minister, coordinator or senior representative may move on, and the work can be forced to start again.

The clip sets out three ways to make Barnahus less dependent on who happens to be in the room. Structured multi-agency processes can distribute ownership across agencies; evidence can give decision-makers something to stand behind publicly and institutionally; and formal structures such as written agreements, accountability clauses, budget lines and legal references can help commitments survive turnover.

Institutionalisation requires both structure and relationships. Documents, agreements and formal processes matter, but they only work when they are kept alive through active coordination, resourcing and continued attention.

## Tool: Champion mapping and readiness

Individual champions are often essential at the beginning of a Barnahus journey. They open doors, build trust, keep momentum alive, and persuade others to participate. But they can also become a vulnerability if progress depends too much on who is personally in the room.

This tool helps Barnahus identify where implementation relies on individual commitment, and how to anchor that commitment in structures, evidence, agreements, and routines that can survive personnel changes.

| Area of work                          | Current champion(s) | What they make possible | What would be at risk if they left? |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Political support                     |                     |                         |                                     |
| Ministry / national agency engagement |                     |                         |                                     |
| Police / justice cooperation          |                     |                         |                                     |

| <b>Area of work</b>                           | <b>Current champion(s)</b> | <b>What they make possible</b> | <b>What would be at risk if they left?</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Child protection / social welfare cooperation |                            |                                |                                            |
| Health / medical cooperation                  |                            |                                |                                            |
| Mental health cooperation                     |                            |                                |                                            |
| Funding or resourcing                         |                            |                                |                                            |
| Training and quality                          |                            |                                |                                            |
| Data, evidence, or evaluation                 |                            |                                |                                            |
| Local implementation                          |                            |                                |                                            |
| Lived experience input                        |                            |                                |                                            |
| Child participation mechanisms                |                            |                                |                                            |
| Other                                         |                            |                                |                                            |

## Dependency Risk Assessment

| Risk                                                                | Low | Medium | High | Notes |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|--------|------|-------|
| Progress depends on one or two individuals.                         |     |        |      |       |
| Commitments are informal rather than formalised.                    |     |        |      |       |
| Funding is short-term or tied to one person's advocacy.             |     |        |      |       |
| Partner roles are unclear or contested.                             |     |        |      |       |
| No regular forum exists for resolving cross-agency issues.          |     |        |      |       |
| Evidence is not routinely collected or shared with decision-makers. |     |        |      |       |

## Action Plan

| Priority | Institutional commitment we need to build | Why it matters | Owner | By when |
|----------|-------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|---------|
| 1.       |                                           |                |       |         |
| 2.       |                                           |                |       |         |
| 3.       |                                           |                |       |         |
| ...      |                                           |                |       |         |

## Reflection Questions

- Which relationships are working because people trust each other personally, and which are protected by formal agreements?
- If a key champion/staff member left tomorrow, which Barnahus funding / investments / support / routines would continue without disruption?
- Which agency commitments need to move from "supportive person" to "institutional obligation"?
- How are new police, prosecutors, child protection workers, medical professionals, or therapists introduced to the Barnahus way of working?

## Is the system ready to move?

### Watch: The “gates of government” collaboration framework – moving from goodwill to institutional action

<https://youtu.be/RluwdGWvj5I>

**TIP! View all videos in one playlist:** <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTxJ19fWo7ik>

Successful advocacy is not only about pushing for change. You must also be prepared to move quickly when the opportunity arrives, while also strengthening the conditions that make that opportunity more likely.

Gabriel Lester, Spring Impact, sets out the conditions that often need to be in place before governments can act: recognised political priority, ownership within the system, the right people at the table, and a concrete mechanism such as a law, strategy, reform process, or budget line.

The presentation discusses the difference between encouraging but weak signals, such as warm meetings or pilot permission, and stronger signs that a window for change may genuinely be opening, such as finance or legal departments becoming involved, government actors committing in writing, and requests for adjustments to future planning.

### Watch: Scaling Barnahus in Germany: momentum, patience, and being ready for windows of opportunity

[https://youtu.be/u\\_qbWHgT5JA](https://youtu.be/u_qbWHgT5JA)

**TIP! View all videos in one playlist:** <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTxJ19fWo7ik>

Germany's experience shows that scaling requires both momentum and patience. It needs champions, investors, governance, quality assurance, and a long-term plan for how the service can become embedded across systems rather than dependent on short-term enthusiasm.

Astrid Helling-Bakki, World Childhood Foundation Germany, offers a detailed case example of how Barnahus developed in Germany. She presents the work of adapting the approach for a complex legal, welfare, medical, and child protection federal landscape. She further presents its contribution to the broader professionalisation of child protection, victim rights, multidisciplinary work, and child safeguarding.

Watch this clip to learn about the conditions needed for scaling, and the importance of quality standards, legal adaptation, financing beyond the first pilot period, expectation management, and being ready for an open window.

## Watch: Building the case for the Lighthouse in England – from local service to national expansion

<https://youtu.be/jBc0mBOCTE8>

**TIP! View all videos in one playlist:** <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTxJ19fWo7ik>

This clip shares the experience of the Lighthouse in England and the wider journey towards scaling Child House / Barnahus approaches through NHS England. Effie Stergiopoulou describes years of advocacy, service development, evidence-building, and relationship-building that helped create the conditions for broader recognition and expansion. Tony Beaman, NHS England, describes the initial plans to take The Lighthouse to every NHS region in England.

The presentations demonstrate that advocacy often works cumulatively. Individual activities may feel invisible at the time, but they can build credibility, allies, evidence, and readiness across the system. The discussion also addresses the practical challenge of rolling out a complex, multi-agency approach over a defined implementation period.

Watch this video to learn how a local service can contribute to wider national change, and how evidence, strategic roles, influential allies, and policy opportunities can combine over time.

## Tool: Political Window Readiness Checklist

Political windows can open quickly, but not every positive signal means the system is ready to act.

This tool helps Barnahus assess whether political interest is becoming a real opportunity for institutional change. It distinguishes between weak signals, such as warm words or meeting attendance, and stronger signals, such as finance/legal involvement, public political capital, practical implementation questions, and formal routes for action.

| Signal                                                    | Status: e.g.<br>Present /<br>Absent /<br>Unknown | Evidence + Examples                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Meaningful signals</b>                                 |                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Government actors invest public political capital.        |                                                  | e.g. A minister or agency director publicly connects Barnahus to a national child protection, justice, or violence prevention priority.                              |
| The issue is connected to an existing strategy or reform. |                                                  | e.g. Barnahus is linked to a child protection reform, victims' rights strategy, child sexual abuse response plan, justice reform, or international legal obligation. |
| Officials ask practical implementation questions.         |                                                  | e.g. Officials ask about costs, sequencing, legal barriers, referral criteria, staffing, training, or how to expand beyond a pilot site.                             |
| Finance or legal departments become involved.             |                                                  | e.g. Finance asks for a costed service; legal advisers review information-sharing, testimony, or interagency agreement requirements.                                 |
| There is an institutional vehicle.                        |                                                  | e.g. Barnahus can be included in a law, regulation, national action plan, budget line, agency assignment, or formal interministerial process.                        |
| Government commits capacity.                              |                                                  | e.g. Agencies nominate permanent representatives, allocate staff time, provide a venue, or fund coordination.                                                        |
| Decision-makers discuss trade-offs.                       |                                                  | e.g. Government asks what can be phased, what is essential, what can be adapted regionally, or what minimum service is affordable.                                   |
| There is a realistic timeframe.                           |                                                  | e.g. A reform process, budget cycle, election commitment, evaluation, or EU reporting deadline creates a concrete decision point.                                    |

|                                            |  |                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Weak signals</b>                        |  |                                                                                                                                            |
| Warm words                                 |  | e.g. "Barnahus is very interesting" but no next meeting, decision, owner, or request.                                                      |
| Meeting attendance                         |  | e.g. Several agencies attend a workshop but do not nominate decision-makers or agree actions.                                              |
| Pilot without buy-in from key stakeholders |  | e.g. A site tests the approach, but there is no buy-in from key stakeholders nor plan for funding, legal adaptation, or national learning. |
| Single champion                            |  | e.g. One official is highly committed, but their agency has made no formal commitment.                                                     |
| Study visit enthusiasm                     |  | e.g. Decision-makers visit a Barnahus abroad and praise it, but do not connect it to domestic reform mechanisms.                           |

### Readiness matrix

| Category           | Description                                                                                                                 | Potential next action                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| High readiness     | Multiple genuine signals are present. There is a clear institutional vehicle, practical engagement, and internal ownership. | Prepare to move quickly. Clarify the offer, implementation plan, evidence, and decision asks. <b><i>What do we need to have ready within the next four weeks?</i></b> |
| Emerging readiness | Some strong signals are present, but key conditions are missing or fragile.                                                 | Strengthen missing conditions. Build alliances, clarify costs, prepare evidence, and identify the institutional vehicle.                                              |
| Early interest     | There is goodwill, but little evidence of practical commitment.                                                             | Keep the relationship warm. Focus on awareness, framing, and internal champions.                                                                                      |
| Not yet ready      | Interest is weak, unclear, or symbolic. More groundwork is needed.                                                          | Patience and perseverance. Focus on evidence, shared problem definition, and long-term positioning.                                                                   |

## **Reflection Questions**

- What are we interpreting as a "political window", and what evidence do we have?
- Are we seeing genuine readiness, or mainly politeness and goodwill?
- Who inside the system has both interest and capacity to move this forward?
- What is the concrete decision, mechanism, or commitment we are asking for?
- What do we need to prepare now so that we can move quickly if the window opens?

# How do you maintain quality as Barnahus scales?

## Watch: Scaling with quality: support, monitoring, and evaluation

<https://youtu.be/4ynLDFuQnTU>

**TIP! View all videos in one playlist:** <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTxJ19fWo7ik>

Scaling with quality safely depends on more than standards. Partners need training, tools, support, clear roles, agreed responsibilities, and mechanisms for learning and correction.

Nora Dettor, Spring Impact, presents how to maintain quality as Barnahus scales through partners, regions, or national systems. It distinguishes between quality assurance, which is the work done upfront to help partners deliver well, and quality control, which is the ongoing monitoring and correction of delivery once implementation is underway.

Attention: if organisations under-invest in quality assurance, they may end up relying too heavily on monitoring and remedial action later.

## Watch: Scaling Barnahus in Sweden: access, quality, and national coordination

<https://youtu.be/6pq6q3OMLVA>

**TIP! View all videos in one playlist:** <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTxJ19fWo7ik>

Frida Bertilsson from the Swedish Crime Victim Authority (Brottsoffermyndigheten) describes Sweden's work to strengthen national coordination, access, and quality across Barnahus services. Frida's presentation shows how while Sweden has embraced Barnahus and has many locations, there are still questions around consistency, governance, data, access, and accountability. The presentation demonstrates that scaling is not simply about increasing the number of sites; it is also about maintaining quality and equity once the approach has spread.

Watch this clip if you are thinking about national systems, quality standards, rural access, and the challenge of moving from a locally driven approach to a more coordinated national approach.

### What children define as quality

Children define quality through both what services achieve and how services feel. The [Child Outcomes Review](#) identifies five connected domains:

- trustworthy, respectful professional relationships;
- clear, age-appropriate information and meaningful participation;
- physical, emotional, and procedural safety;
- timely, trauma-informed support for wellbeing and recovery; and
- a coordinated, personalised response.

Use these domains as a starting point for scaling with quality: decide how each will be protected, measured, and strengthened as reach expands, and how children will help assess whether the scaled service meets them.

## Tool: Quality assurance and control planner

💡 Tip: Test how your quality management processes work to ensure impact is upheld.

🔍 Extra Resource: Go deeper using the Spring Impact [scale tools](#).

Complete one row for each role: define the standard, the support a partner needs to meet it, and how quality will be monitored and corrected.

| Role/responsibility we are asking partner to deliver | Quality standard the partner would ideally meet                          | Support package element to enable partner to meet standard        | If relevant, how will you measure and correct quality?                   |
|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Timely access                                        | Example: Children receive the right service within the agreed timeframe. | Example: referral pathway, intake guidance, and service planning. | Example: Review waiting times and child feedback; agree remedial action. |
| Child-centred coordination                           |                                                                          |                                                                   |                                                                          |
| Avoiding retraumatisation                            |                                                                          |                                                                   |                                                                          |
| Trained professionals                                |                                                                          |                                                                   |                                                                          |
| Interagency information sharing and case planning    |                                                                          |                                                                   |                                                                          |
| Child participation                                  |                                                                          |                                                                   |                                                                          |
| Safety and safeguarding                              |                                                                          |                                                                   |                                                                          |
| Equity of access                                     |                                                                          |                                                                   |                                                                          |
| Data and learning                                    |                                                                          |                                                                   |                                                                          |
| <i>(continue adding as needed)</i>                   |                                                                          |                                                                   |                                                                          |

## Tool: Support package builder

 Tip: Test how your quality management processes work to ensure impact is upheld.

 Extra Resource: Go deeper using the Spring Impact [scale tools](#).

| Stakeholder 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Initial support                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Ongoing support                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barnahus induction for all partner agencies.</li> <li>• Overview of Barnahus, principles, and minimum core.</li> <li>• Interagency agreement template.</li> <li>• Referral pathway and eligibility guidance.</li> <li>• Case planning meeting template.</li> <li>• Information-sharing guidance adapted to national law.</li> <li>• Child-friendly communication materials.</li> <li>• Forensic interview / child-sensitive interview training pathway.</li> <li>• Medical and mental health referral protocols.</li> <li>• Site visit or shadowing opportunity.</li> <li>• Start-up checklist for a new site or partner.</li> <li>• Data collection template and reporting guidance.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refresher training for new staff.</li> <li>• Peer learning between Barnahus sites.</li> <li>• Supervision or practice review sessions.</li> <li>• Annual quality review.</li> <li>• Data review and learning meetings.</li> <li>• Updated guidance when law, policy, or standards change.</li> <li>• Helpdesk or named contact for implementation questions.</li> <li>• Community of practice for coordinators.</li> <li>• Review of difficult interagency cases.</li> <li>• Support for adapting the approach in rural or remote contexts.</li> </ul> |

| Stakeholder 2   |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Initial support | Ongoing support |
|                 |                 |

*Duplicate this table for additional stakeholders*

# What can adapt without losing the Barnahus core?

## Watch: Identifying adaptable elements when scaling Barnahus to multiple locations

<https://youtu.be/tOMqIt-OYw4>

**TIP! View all videos in one playlist:** <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLTxJ19fWo7ik>

What must stay consistent for to deliver impact, and what can adapt to local context? The session introduces the idea of the "core" as the minimum version of a solution required to produce its intended impact, not the most complete or ideal version.

Nora Dettor, Spring Impact, presents the distinction between essential elements, flexible elements, and non-essential additions. In the Barnahus context, this means asking which parts of your Barnahus are non-negotiable for the service to deliver on its intended purpose, and which parts can vary depending on the legal system, available professionals, geography, or local delivery arrangements. Her presentation shows that clarity about the core does not prevent local adaptation; it makes responsible adaptation possible.

## Tool: Identifying how to adapt when scaling to multiple locations

This tool is not intended to replace existing Barnahus standards or national criteria. It is designed to support discussion about what must remain consistent for children, what may need to adapt to local legal and service contexts, and what additions are useful but not essential. Teams should complete this tool with reference to the Barnahus quality standards, applicable national law, policy and standards, and the best interests of the child.

Children's experience is part of the core. The [Child Outcomes Review](#)'s five domains provide a practical test: would the proposed adaptation weaken

- trusting and respectful relationships;
- clear information, choice, and participation;
- physical, emotional, or procedural safety;
- timely and trauma-informed support; or
- coordinated, personalised services?

Involve children in testing proposed adaptations and tell them how their input was used.

***Flexibility should not be used to dilute the Barnahus approach.*** If an element is moved from "essential" to "flexible", ask: would children still experience a coordinated, child-centred, rights-based response? Would the risk of delay, repetition, or retraumatisation increase? Who would notice if quality slipped?

 **Tip:** Consider if the purpose of the proposed local adaptations is to improve the service for children OR mainly due to convenience. Anchor your discussions around the best interests of each individual child. Refer to [Centring the child's experience: A synthesis of evidence for measuring outcomes in Barnahus](#).

## Possible Essential Elements

These should be treated as discussion prompts, not final authoritative standards:

- The response is organised around the child's needs, rights, safety, and best interests.
- Relevant agencies coordinate so the child does not have to navigate fragmented systems alone.
- Barnahus seeks to reduce unnecessary repetition, delay, and retraumatisation.
- Children receive appropriate information and opportunities to be heard.
- Core professional roles are delivered by trained and competent staff.
- There is a safe, child-sensitive setting or pathway for meeting the child.
- Protection, investigation, medical, and psychosocial needs are planned in a coordinated way.
- Interagency roles, responsibilities, and information-sharing arrangements are clear.
- Quality is monitored and learning is used to improve practice.

## Possible Flexible Elements

- Which agency hosts or coordinates the Barnahus.
- The exact venue, outreach, or regional arrangement.
- The sequencing of appointments.
- The training provider or curriculum, as long as agreed competencies are covered.
- The composition of local partner agencies, where functions are fulfilled differently.
- The format of case meetings, provided coordination and accountability are maintained.
- How specialist support is accessed in rural or low-resource areas.

## Possible Nice-to-Have Elements

- A purpose-built building, where an adapted child-friendly space would also work.
- Additional therapy rooms beyond what is needed for current demand.
- Advanced digital case-management systems before basic information-sharing routines are agreed.
- Communications materials that are polished but not yet translated or accessible.
- Additional advisory groups if core governance is not yet functioning.
- Branding or launch activities before operational pathways are clear.

 **Tip:** Imagine you are giving instructions to a new team member who will be delivering your solution tomorrow. How would you make sure the most important things happen?

| Essential elements                                                                                                                                                                              | Flexible elements | Nice to have |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| <b>Best interests:</b> Ensuring that the best interests of the child are placed at the centre of practice and decision-making                                                                   |                   |              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |              |
| <b>Child participation:</b> the rights to information and to be heard are fulfilled without causing (re)traumatisation, including through providing them with adequate information at all times |                   |              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |              |
| <b>Prevent undue delay:</b> protection, assistance and justice processes are undertaken in a timely way                                                                                         |                   |              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |              |
| <b>Multidisciplinary and interagency collaboration</b>                                                                                                                                          |                   |              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |              |
| <b>Inclusive target group</b>                                                                                                                                                                   |                   |              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |              |
| <b>Child friendly environment</b>                                                                                                                                                               |                   |              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |              |
| <b>Interagency case management</b>                                                                                                                                                              |                   |              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |              |
| <b>Child protection</b>                                                                                                                                                                         |                   |              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |              |
| <b>Forensic interview</b>                                                                                                                                                                       |                   |              |
| <b>Medical examination</b>                                                                                                                                                                      |                   |              |

| Essential elements                                                                         | Flexible elements | Nice to have |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
|                                                                                            |                   |              |
| <b>Therapeutic services</b>                                                                |                   |              |
|                                                                                            |                   |              |
| <b>Capacity building</b>                                                                   |                   |              |
|                                                                                            |                   |              |
| <b>Prevention: information sharing, awareness raising and external competence building</b> |                   |              |
|                                                                                            |                   |              |



**The Barnahus Network supports countries in realising children's rights to protection, justice and care by adopting Barnahus as a standard practice for children involved in cases concerning violence. We undertake this work so that all children may enjoy their right to be protected from violence.**

Our work is advancing Barnahus through research, evidence, and practice, and also supporting members to achieve excellence in practice. Our members are Barnahus, ministries, government agencies, NGOs, academics, individuals, and other stakeholders who share a commitment to full, incremental implementation of the Barnahus Quality Standards.

**Learn more at [www.barnahus.eu](http://www.barnahus.eu)**



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