

Press Release

25th January 2018

Immediate release



Family mediation works, but low levels of awareness mean families are missing out

The Family Mediation Council has today published the results of its survey of family mediators, conducted in Autumn 2017.

The responses show that family mediation works to settle disputes between separating couples, with whole or partial agreement achieved in 70% of cases.

These success rates are consistent with figures from previous studies. They confirm that, in nearly half (45%) of cases, written proposals were agreed and that, in a further quarter of cases, proposals were either reached on some issues (13%) or all issues, but that these were not written up (12%).

Despite this, the survey also shows that only one third (33.5%) of cases that are suitable for family mediation proceed beyond an initial information and assessment meeting.

John Taylor, chair of the Family Mediation Council, said: "Family mediation offers separating couples the opportunity to explore the options available to them upon separation. It is widely accepted to be cheaper, quicker and less stressful than court proceedings. This survey confirms just how effective the process can be. With legal aid available for those on low incomes, people considering issuing family proceedings in courts should not just consider family mediation as an option because they are obliged to. They should consider it for the benefits it can bring to their family. The low level of take-up suggests that people are unaware of those benefits, and so are missing out on them. I urge all separating couples to turn to family mediation as the best way to resolve their disputes"

People looking for a family mediator should use the "[Find A Mediator](#)" service on the FMC's website, or call 01920 443 834. Both services will search the FMC Register, a database of professional family mediators regulated by the Family Mediation Standards Board.

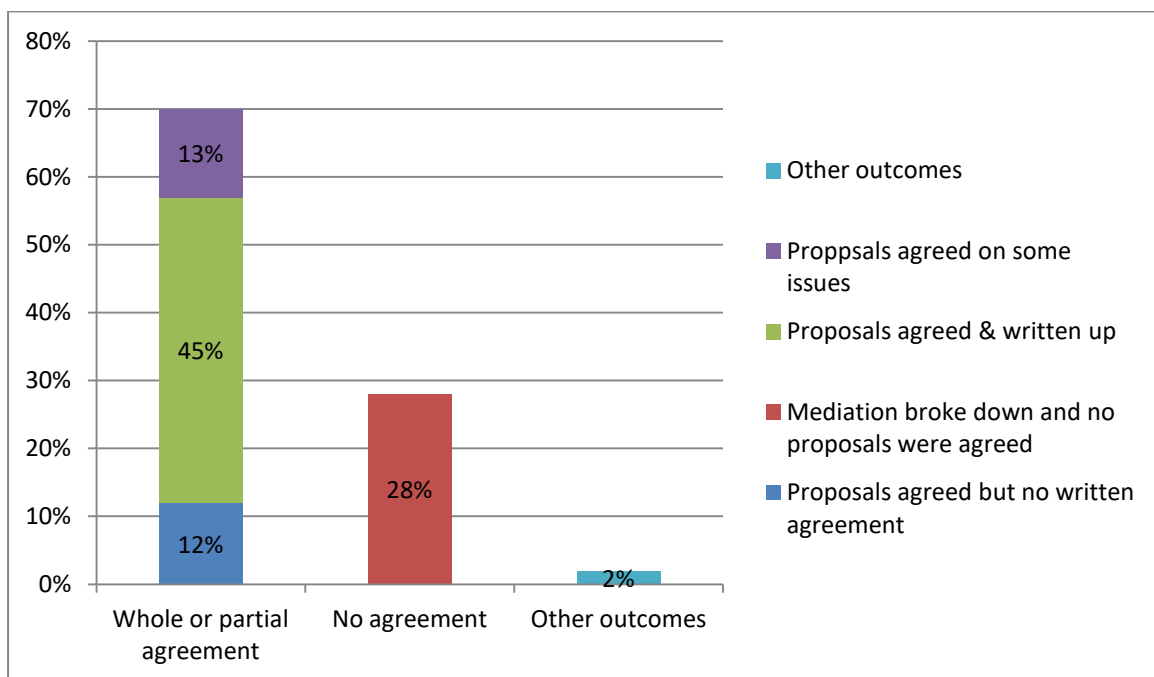
Notes to editors:

1. The Family Mediation Council (FMC) is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee. Its aim is to promote the use of family mediation for the benefit of the public.

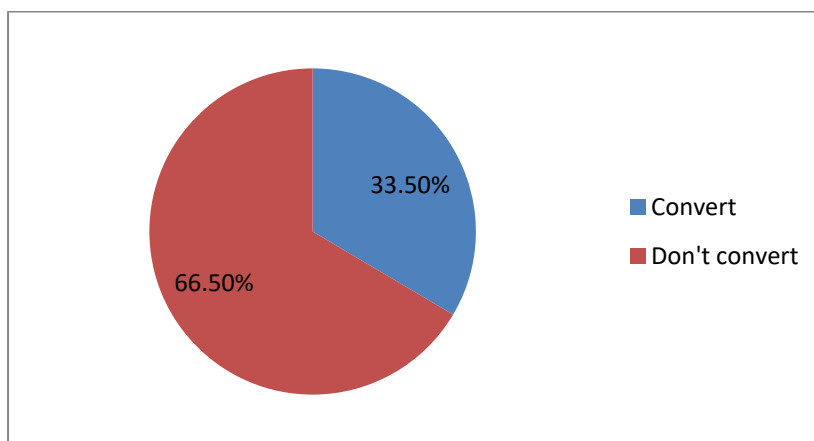
2. The FMC conducted a survey of its registered mediators in Autumn 2017. 126 family mediators responded. Full survey results are available on request.

3. The following graphs illustrate the information referred to above:

How successful is family mediation?



Conversion from assessment and information meetings to mediation



4. Unless exempt, people considering making applications to the court for family proceedings are obliged to attend a Mediation Information and Assessment Meeting, to learn about the mediation process and other ways of settling a dispute outside of court proceedings.

5. Legal aid is available for family mediation on a means-tested basis.

6. The Family Mediation Standards Board is a standing committee of the FMC which has operational independence to make regulatory decisions. It oversees the registration of family mediators to ensure they meet professional standards, including the operation of complaints procedures.

7. For more information about the Family Mediation Council or its survey please contact Helen Anthony via e-mail executive@familymediationcouncil.org.uk or phone 07817 743194.