

Key Learning Baby C

What is a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR)?

The purpose of a LCSPR is to look at what happened and why, focusing on the systems that practitioners work within and how practice can be improved.

Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership have conducted a LCSPR following the death of a small child C. This briefing has been developed to support practitioners to understand, identify and learn from practice.

Safeguarding Concerns and Incident

- Baby C had been on a Child Protection Plan under the category of neglect following his birth. Baby C's older siblings had been removed from their mother's care, by a different local authority prior to baby C's birth.
- Mother had moved into the Durham area whilst pregnant with Baby C.
- Baby C's parents were no longer in a relationship, their relationship broke down whilst mother was pregnant.
- Baby C remained in his mother's care, living in supported accommodation until he was 4 months old.
- Baby C died at 7 months old, he was found unresponsive in the bath.

What have we learned from practice?

- The importance of obtaining relevant information and analysis from out of area agencies who have recent or ongoing involvement with children and families.
- The need to include all fathers, males and family members who play significant roles in children's lives.
- The importance of a robust multi agency handover process.
- The need to understand family history, and individual social history in the context of assessments.
- The importance of regular monitoring the home environment in which a child lives in.
- All agencies with relevant knowledge of, or involvement with, a child and their family need to be invited to multi-agency meetings.

The importance of management oversight and clear recording when a case transfers from Child Protection plan to a Child in Need plan.

- The importance not accepting information at face value, information should be questioned and challenged by professionals.

What has happened since?

- The Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership have identified cumulative harm as a area for learning for the Partnership and has developed dedicated tools around this issue.
- ICON training has been offered to the partnership at Safeguarding Week 2022.
- Multi agency Chronology template has been shared with partner agencies.
- Unseen Male multiagency audits completed by the DSCP.
- The development of the HEAT tool, 7-minute briefing completed by the DSCP.
- Supervision and management oversight has been a golden thread in all the work completed by DSCP.

Recommendations for further learning

- The Durham Safeguarding Partners to initiate a conversation with regional colleagues to explore ways of improving cross-boundary information sharing.
- Durham's protocol for multi-agency engagement in Strategies and Section 47 enquiries will then need to be updated to explicitly cover cross-boundary working and the processes that should be followed to ensure appropriate engagement of out of area professionals. (Cross boundary working is not mentioned in the current protocol.)
- Knowledge of this revised guidance will need to be cascaded to all relevant practitioners.

Recommendations for further learning

- All members of the Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership contribute to a concerted campaign to ensure that frontline practitioners have a practical understanding of both their individual and collective role in multi-agency work to safeguard children.
- The partnership to ensure standards for reflective discussions are embedded, and health agencies should review their safeguarding supervision policies to ensure there is sufficient oversight and support.
- The refreshed Home Environment Assessment (HEAT) tool and related family engagement tools should be rolled out alongside the campaign to empower individual frontline practitioners to be more pro-active in multi-agency safeguarding meetings.
- All agencies to audit the use of these tools and to ensure they are consistently recorded in case files.

Useful Resources

- Culminative Harm guidance [Practitioners Quick Guide to Cumulative Harm \(durham-scp.org.uk\)](https://durham-scp.org.uk)
- ICON Training <http://iconcope.org/>
- Multi agency chronology template
- NSPCC Learning '*Unseen men: learning from case reviews*' (September 2022) [Unseen men: learning from case reviews | NSPCC Learning](#)
- The Home Environment Assessment Tool, HEAT 'Toolkits and guidance for practitioners: <https://durham-scp.org.uk/professionals/early-help-and-neglect/toolkits-and-guidance-for-practitioners-single-assessments-and-early-help/>