

Practitioner briefing on Child G (Dec 2019)

Introduction

In order to respect the wishes and rights of the young person, this briefing deliberately focuses on the learning for practitioners and does not provide any details on the specifics of the case. Child G refers to a young person where there were allegations of neglect and sexual abuse.

1. Access to services in timely way:

There were missed opportunities for a holistic and multi-agency assessment and response to Child G's emotional needs. The school noted a number of concerns, and these were raised with Children's Social Care, who were involved. However it was unclear where the school were recording safeguarding concerns and who they were shared with – both within school and external agencies.

Subsequently a number of schools have invested in recording systems which enable them to have a better overview of the risks and concerns, and to track the actions being undertaken.

2. **Recording:** Chronologies consistently enable a practitioner to gain a wider view of events. In this case there was no evidence of chronologies being maintained or information being collated in such a way as to enable a wider understanding of the child's history. Chronologies are a helpful tool for all agencies and e- learning is available on [chronologies](#) via the Pan Beds LSCB training unit

3. **Medical assessments:** Child G received routine health assessments but was not medically examined. Practice has changed with the expectation that medicals should be requested in all cases of concern including neglect (whilst recognising the right of a young person to decline).

4. **Supervision:** There was a need for better management and supervision by several agencies. Whilst some agencies do not have formal supervision, there is a benefit in case management which provides an opportunity for reflection and challenge e.g. rather than waiting for a child to make an allegations, consider if there are other steps that might enable progress. In this case the independent support of an expert intermediary could have been beneficial to assist in clarifying how best to effectively communicate with Child G.

5. **Voice of child:** There was some very good evidence by some practitioners of securing Child G's wishes and feelings. However there are two points of learning from this case

- Ensuring appropriate use of specialists to provide advice on how to engage with the child / adult if they have learning needs.
- How is behaviour interpreted? Quite often when children act out and especially children with additional needs, professionals can make assumptions about the cause

of this behaviour. All practitioners need to be curious about the causal nature of behaviour and seek to explore alternative reasons (and ask if there are other potential reasons for the behaviour). This can be supported by information being shared and discussed collaboratively between professionals in order to gain a clear view of what is happening.