



Procedure for Resolving Professional Disagreements

1.0 Introduction

The West Yorkshire Procedure Section 8.2 - Resolving Professional Disagreements ends at point 5.2, when all steps contained have been followed and where professional differences remain and/or discussions have raised significant policy issues. At this point the procedure states any unresolved/disputed matter should be referred on to the LSCB Manager.

This short procedure should be used to follow on from the West Yorkshire Procedure Section 8.2 - Resolving Professional Disagreements point 5.2, which is the point at which the LSCB Manager has been notified. When the LSCB Manager is notified (as point 5.2) then the course of action set out below should be followed.

2.0 Principles of Dispute Resolution

- Disputes must be resolved in a timely manner and that resolution processes must not detract from a focus on safeguarding the child / young person.
- Disputes need to be resolved at the lowest possible level in each of the involved agencies.
- Failure to resolve will result in the issue being escalated through the hierarchies of each agency.
- It is the responsibility of agencies to resolve disputes and the LSCB Business Support Team should only become involved in the rare occasions when agencies have exhausted a resolution process between them.

3.0 Process of Dispute Resolution

- The line managers of the professional involved should first address the concerns.
- If agreement cannot be reached following discussions between the above 'first line' managers, the issue must be referred without any delay through the line-management of each agency.
- Alternatively, and more commonly in health services, input may be sought directly from the Designated or Named Professional in preference to use of line management.

4.0 Final Stage where LSCB Manager becomes Involved

1. The LSCB Manager (or their nominated representative) will inform the LSCB representative of each agency involved with the disagreement and ensure they have full details of the disputed matter.
2. The LSCB Manager (or their nominated representative) will convene a panel to allow the issues of professional dissent to be considered in full and a resolution reached.
3. The panel will be chaired by the LSCB Manager (or their nominated representative) and its membership will consist of the LSCB representative or a nominated senior manager for each agency involved in the disagreement (where an agency does not have a representative on the board a senior manager should fulfil this role).
4. Discussion of the panel meeting will be recorded and notes taken by the LSCB BST administrator.
5. Where resolution is still not possible the LSCB Manager will inform the LSCB Chair who will raise the matter with the Director of Children's Services.
6. Any lessons or general issues of concern resulting from the process should be reported to the relevant sub group of the LSCB.

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