

LEARNING LESSONS FROM NATIONAL SERIOUS CASE REVIEWS ON CHILDREN

A PRECIS OF 9 SERIOUS CASE REVIEW EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

This review has looked at 9 executive summaries of serious case reviews (SCR) involving the death or serious injury to a child where abuse or neglect was the main or contributing factor.

A brief summary of the case has been provided with some of the key learning points for all practitioners. A number of the lessons to be learnt are of value to key groups of staff, who may benefit from access to the full executive summary. All of the summaries have been embedded in this document.

The 9 Executive Summaries reviewed cover a wide range of issues which involve children of varying ages. Staff are invited to review the précis and identify which cases are applicable to their services (this is listed within the summary) and read the full Executive Summary and identify what are the key lessons for them.

The LSCB suggest that the above review can be done:

- Individually
- As part of team meeting
- As part of agency/inter-agency training

Individual agencies may identify key areas different from those highlighted by the reviewer which feel more relevant to their service.

Each agency is asked to consider the identified salient points and challenge how these areas are/or would be responded to within their service.

Overarching issues from the 9 Executive Summaries

Assessments

Ensure that all assessments undertaken are of good quality and that assessments are a dynamic process.

Managing children who pose a risk to others

What multi-agencies processes are in place for assessing and managing the risk posed by children known or suspected to sexually abuse other children and young people.

Domestic abuse

Staff must understand the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people.

Share information

Information which is accurate and shared across professionals is one of the most important tools for staff. Verbal information sharing is a good start but always back up in writing.

Child focus

Ensure that in everything you do you consider the child, your actions and records need to reflect this.

Child In Need

Child protection procedures

Understand these and use appropriately. If in doubt ask your safeguarding lead. Information known about parents: Historical information should be considered along side current information. Issues around mental health and substance misuse need to be reviewed with a child focus.

Absent men

Gather as much information you can about 'fathers' or 'males' who become involved in children's lives. Reviews show that limited information is recorded about males.

Over optimistic

Professionals need to be more balanced in their beliefs that family's circumstances can or cannot change. Optimism must be based on available evidence.

Conclusion

SCRs continue to identify that we cannot prevent all deaths or serious injuries but that we can with:

- Good multi-agency working
- Quality information sharing
- Comprehensive assessments
- Adherence to procedures

And above all a FOCUS ON THE CHILD reduces the number of serious cases.