

## **Multi-Agency Audit May 2020**

### **Summary for Practitioners and Managers**

West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership undertakes multi agency audits as part of its quality assurance and scrutiny processes to evaluate the effectiveness of practice across the partnership.

In May 2020 the partnership completed an audit focusing specifically on children under two that had repeated contacts and referrals.

#### **Method**

The sample was drawn from a cohort of children that that were referred to Children Social Care in the period between July 2019-December 2019. These included children aged under two with three or more contact or referrals in that period. A total of twenty children were identified for the audit. This cohort included 60% that had not proceeded to either assessment or child protection and 40% that had proceeded to an assessment or child protection process. From this sample of 20 children- 10 were subject to the multi-agency audit and the remained subject to an additional CSC single agency audit.

#### **Key findings from the Audit:**

##### **Strengths in Multi-Agency Practice**

- ✓ Immediate safeguarding concerns are referred quickly
- ✓ Agencies record the decision of the referral on their own records
- ✓ Evidence of good information sharing with key agencies
- ✓ Evidence of recent history of domestic abuse and or mental health were recorded on agency records

##### **Areas to Strengthen**

- ✚ All practitioners need to be confident to seek consent to share information to ensuring that all agencies working with the family have all the relevant information to respond to need and risk
- ✚ Mental health services should consistently consider the needs of children when they are working with parents. They should be involved in assessments at the first point of contact to children's social care
- ✚ When assessments are concluded or CIN plan are ended or stepped down all agencies working with the family should be informed and record this information on their own records

- ✚ A low number of referrals from Health Visitors in the audit sample will be analysed further to ensure that children that require Universal plus and Universal partnership plus services receive the enhanced offer
- ✚ When there has been repeat contacts and/or repeat referrals there should be management oversight to ensure the response has considered any cumulative effects on the children and not just focused on each incident in isolation.
- ✚ All Practitioners need to be confident to challenge decision making if they think it will not address the need or risks

### **Taking the Learning into your practice**

Take the issues raised in this audit into your supervision, team meeting and group supervision

#### **Consider the following:**

- Do I always ask families what other agencies are working with them?
- Do I always ask families if I can share relevant information with these agencies to ensure they can have the best support at the right time?
- Do I always tell other professionals when I have finished working with a family?
- Do I challenge a decision if I think they are not right for a child?

***Remember Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility all the time***

#### **Resources:**

**[WSSCP Escalation Policy](#)**

**[Information Sharing Agreement](#)**