

# Serious Case Review T Learning Handout

## **Background**

In 2017 an eight week old infant died from a suspected abusive head trauma, likely to have been caused by shaking and the use of excessive force. The father of the infant was arrested and later convicted of manslaughter and causing grievous bodily harm. Although the family were not previously known to services or deemed as vulnerable, this serious case review provides valuable learning to inform future practice in order to adapt the way professionals explore risk and consider safeguarding processes when working with parents and carers.

## **The Review Found:**

Injuries caused to the infant were inflicted by the father and although there were no specific risks identified within the family to predict this, processes and general offers of support from professionals around coping with crying babies were generally aimed at mothers.

## **Key Theme 1:**

Male carers can be difficult to engage and workers often find this a challenge.

## **How to Think About This in Your Practice:**

When you are working with a family, consider how best to share information with both parents/carers. Ensure you have a balance of sharing information with both parents at the same time as well as giving parents the opportunity to share potentially sensitive information independently such as concerns or a possible disclosure of domestic abuse. You may need to consider timings of visits to work around shift patterns, locations of meetings and the best ways to share information, such as face to face meetings, via text messages or using appropriate apps or websites with further information on specific topics.

## **Key Theme 2:**

Although some effective information sharing took place between professionals, this was not consistent and holistic across agencies. Sharing information in an appropriate and timely way is crucial element in safeguarding children. Information that is shared between agencies can improve the decision-making process so that actions taken are in the best interests of the child.

## **How to Think About This in Your Practice:**

Consider how much information you need to share. Information needs to be accurate and the worker should be clear between information that is fact and opinion. Data protection legislation should not be a barrier to sharing information, but is a reminder to professionals about the importance of recording correctly and storing securely. Make sure you are familiar with your organisation's processes on this. Click [here](#) to read more about information sharing and click [here](#) to read the Government guidance.