

Learning from Case Management Reviews

A Regional and number of local events were undertaken during 2018/2019 to disseminate the learning from four Case Management Reviews (CMRs).

The main learning from these is outlined below:

- There should be a Regional Multi-Agency Protocol for Sudden Unexplained Death in Infancy in Northern Ireland which should include within the definition; where babies are determined as deceased on first presentation, when the birth is not overseen by a relevant health professional.
- The need for a consistent and co-ordinated multi-agency approach in Northern Ireland regarding young people who display harmful sexual behaviours which balances the need for treatment & Judicial processes.
- Expert reports which are commissioned should be subject to agreed Terms of Reference, increased scrutiny and governance processes.
- Inter-agency arrangements for information sharing and escalating concerns need to be strengthened.
- A consistent and co-ordinated approach for the assessment of adults who are thought to pose a risk to children and young people in a family context.
- The importance of ensuring adherence to the procedures under the 'Protocol for Joint Investigation by Social Workers and Police Officers of Alleged and Suspected Cases of Child Abuse - Northern Ireland and for more robust enquiries in situations where children, especially those who are known to be vulnerable, do not want to make a complaint or complete a police interview.
- The importance of the involvement and participation of GPs in child protection and the identification of the problems experienced in achieving this under the current circumstances.
- The issue of neglect and the far-reaching negative impact it has on children.
- The importance of seeing the 'lived experience of the child' in neglect cases and the need to undertake comprehensive investigations and assessment to identify patterns of parenting.
- Be aware of the issue of cumulative concerns vs single issue referrals particularly in cases of neglect.
- The importance of medical input regarding the issue of neglect.

- The need to engage with and communicate with children without inference of parents so the child's voice is heard.
- Decisions on the competence of older children in cases of neglect need to be set within the context of the impact of neglect on the child and the effect this has on a child's wishes and feelings.
- The need to ensure the appropriate application of the 'pre-proceedings' case management process in cases where Court proceedings are being considered.
- The need to take a 'think family' perspective when involved with individuals.
- The need to focus on fathers as well as mothers particularly in regard to primary care.