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**‘Learning from Practice’  
Case Management Review  
Process Multi-Agency  
Guidance**

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## **Case Management Review Process Multi-Agency Guidance**

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# CASE MANAGEMENT REVIEW MULTI-AGENCY PROCESS AND GUIDANCE

## 1. Introduction

A key function of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) is to undertake reviews when a child has died or been significantly harmed where there are concerns about the effectiveness in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child or where there has been positive practice, and there is significant learning to be gained from a review being held which will lead to substantial improvements in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Northern Ireland.

The purpose of a Case Management Review (CMR) is to strengthen the child protection system. Whilst a review may reflect on the practice of individual professionals involved in a case, its primary focus is not to find fault but rather to examine the organisational systems and processes that assist or allow individuals to make decisions or act in certain ways, in meeting the needs of children and their families and keeping vulnerable children/young people safe.

The focus of a CMR is to:

- establish the facts of the case;
- identify what has worked well so that Member Agencies of the SBNI can build upon it;
- ascertain if there are lessons to be learned from the case about the way in which professionals and statutory and/or voluntary agencies work together to safeguard children/young people; and
- identify clearly what those lessons are, how they will be acted upon and what is expected to change as a consequence.

The purpose of this document is to outline the CMR Process under the auspices of the SBNI for member agencies and other relevant organisations/bodies. Please also

refer to the SBNI Guidance 2014<sup>1</sup>. All Agencies/professionals represented on SBNI have a responsibility to cooperate with the CMR process.

## 2. Legislation

Section 3(4) of the Safeguarding Board Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 places a duty on the SBNI to carry out CMRs in prescribed circumstances which are set out under Regulation 17 (2) and (3) of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (Membership, Procedure, Function and Committee) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012. The criteria for holding Case Management Reviews are as follows<sup>2</sup>:

17 (2) where -

- (a) a child has died or been significantly harmed;
- (b) any of the following apply:-
  - (i) abuse or neglect of the child is known or suspected;
  - (ii) the child or a sibling of the child is or has been placed on the child protection register maintained by a HSC trust which lists each child resident in the area of the trust who, following an investigation by that trust under Article 66 of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, is subject to a plan to safeguard that child from further harm and promote his health and development; or
  - (iii) the child or a sibling of the child is or has been looked after by an authority within the meaning of Article 25 of the Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995;
- (c) the Safeguarding Board has concerns about the effectiveness in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children of any of the persons or bodies represented on the Safeguarding Board by virtue of section 1(2)(b) and (4) of the Act; and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-safeguarding-board-northern-ireland-0>

<sup>2</sup> See above

- (d) the Safeguarding Board determines that there is significant learning to be gained from the case management review which, if applied effectively, will lead to substantial improvements in practice in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Northern Ireland.

17 (3) Where the Safeguarding Board has determined that a case demonstrates that any of the persons or bodies represented on the Safeguarding Board by virtue of section 1(2)(b) and (4) of the Act, have worked effectively (individually or in partnership) and that there is outstanding positive learning to be gained from the case which will lead to improved practice in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children across Northern Ireland.

It is proposed that the term 'significant' and 'substantial' in 17 (2) (d) are understood as meaning that the learning to be gained from a review of a case is:

- relevant to current processes and systems for safeguarding and promoting the welfare and protection of children;
- likely to be useful given the changes in legislation, policies, systems and practices over time;
- currently applicable to children and families living in similar situations to the child(ren) under review;
- likely to lead to changes that will make a positive difference in how children are safeguarded in Northern Ireland.

### **3. Principles of the CMR Process<sup>3</sup>:**

The principles underlying the CMR process are as follows:

- there should be a culture of continuous learning and improvement across the organisations which work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/guidance-safeguarding-board-northern-ireland-0>

children – identifying opportunities to draw on what works and promotes good practice;

- the process should be conducted with appropriate transparency and sufficient openness to engender professional and public confidence in it;
- the scope of reviews must be proportionate, according to the scale and level of complexity of the issues being examined;
- CMRs must be led by individuals who are independent of the case under review and of the organisations whose actions are being reviewed;
- professionals must be involved fully in reviews and invited to contribute their perspectives without fear of blame for actions they took using their professional judgment and with good intentions;
- families, including surviving children, should be clear about how they are going to be involved in reviews and their expectations should be managed;
- improvement must be sustained through regular monitoring by Agencies and follow up of recommendations and learning so that the findings from these reviews make a real impact on improving outcomes for children. Agencies should report on the progress of these directly to the SBNI.

#### **4. Criteria for Notification**

A notification for a potential CMR must always be completed where a child has died or been significantly harmed **and** one of the points 17 (2) (b) (i), (ii), or (iii) above are satisfied.

Any of the SBNI's Represented Bodies, including the member Agencies of the Safeguarding Panels can make a notification.

It is the responsibility of each Agency to determine whether and at what point, the criteria for notification of a child for a CMR have been met. Each Agency must develop a mechanism to enable them to make a timely determination about whether the criteria for notification are met. Advice can be sought from the CMR Panel Chair and/or the SBNI Professional Officer to assist with queries relating to whether criteria for notification are met.

## **5. Nominated Agency Representative link with SBNI**

Each Member Agency must nominate a Senior Representative at the level of Assistant Director or equivalent to act as the key contact for SBNI in relation to the CMR process, including the completion and signing of the notification form, circulating information and collating responses from other Directorates.

## **6. Cases of Good Practice**

Separate guidance has been developed for cases that are notified under Section 17 (3).

## **7. Child(ren) Known to More Than One Agency**

If an Agency is considering making a notification and is aware that another Agency could/may also be in a position to notify SBNI in respect of the same child a discussion between the Agencies should take place and if possible agreement reached about the need to notify the SBNI and which Agency should make the notification. If no agreement is reached, the Agency who initiated the discussion should still proceed and make a notification to the SBNI if they believe the criteria has been met. This should be included as part of the mechanism each Agency has in place that enables them to make a timely determination about whether the criteria for notification of a potential CMR are met.

## **8. Requests from Members of the Public**

In the event of the SBNI receiving a request from a member of the public to hold a CMR, the CMR Panel Chair will refer the matter to the appropriate Represented Body of the SBNI to consider whether the case meets the CMR criteria for notification. The member of the public will be informed that their concern has been passed on to the appropriate Agency for their attention.



## **9. Timescale for Notification**

A CMR notification should be made within two working days of an Agency determining that the criteria for notification have been met.

## **10. Documentation Required for Notification**

The relevant notification form should be completed and forwarded to the SBNI (Appendix Two). The notification form can be supported by a Briefing Report sent at the time of notification or a short time later, setting out the details and circumstances which led to the notification. Agencies should ensure that the form is fully completed to assist the CMR Panel make a recommendation as to whether or not a CMR should be undertaken. To enable a notification to be considered at the next scheduled CMR Panel meeting, documentation must be received at least two weeks prior to the date of the CMR Panel meeting which usually take place on the first Thursday of each month.

## **11. Involvement of Parent and Child/Young Person in Notification**

Parents/carers of the child being notified, and, if appropriate, the child/young person (depending on age and level of understanding) should be informed by the notifying Agency that a CMR notification is being made to the SBNI.

## **12. Following Notification**

On receipt of a notification the SBNI will inform all appointed representatives on the CMR Panel in writing. Agency or Sector representatives on the CMR Panel will be requested to clarify whether or not the child/family is known to their respective Agencies and complete the template provided (Appendix Three). This will involve the Agency checking all their data bases for relevant information held in relation to services provided to the child/family. If the child/family is known, the appointed representative on the Panel should ensure details of the Agency's involvement and, whether there are any issues identified regarding how Agencies worked together

along with any other relevant information, is submitted to the SBNI using the template provided.

When notifications are received the SBNI Chair, CMR Panel Chair and Professional Officer will consider whether they believe the notification more likely than not meets the criteria for a CMR. For those deemed likely each Agency that has been involved with the child/family will be informed and requested to secure their files and if appropriate, consider nominees for the roles of Individual Agency Review (IAR) Author and/or CMR Team Member(s). Nominations for these roles should be forwarded to the SBNI within 10 working days.

This 'forewarning' process is undertaken in order to ensure timeliness of CMRs. The 'forewarning' process will require preparatory work to be undertaken which should be used to support the completion of the IAR report.

The final decision to ratify a CMR rests with the SBNI Board. Once a decision by the Board has been made that a CMR should be undertaken, Agencies will have six weeks to complete an IAR Report on confirmation of the Board's decision.

### **13. Referral to the CMR Panel**

The notification and all relevant documentation will be considered by the CMR Panel. To assist the CMR Panel with its deliberations the notifying Agency may be asked to nominate a member of staff who is familiar with the case to attend the CMR Panel to discuss the case and answer any questions. Those nominated should not have had direct involvement with the child/family.

A recommendation will be made by the CMR Panel as to whether or not the criteria for undertaking a CMR are met. If a CMR is recommended, the CMR Panel will consider and agree the draft Terms of Reference and methodology. For a recommendation to be made for a CMR the criteria as set down in 17 (2) (a), (b) (c) and (d) must be met. Please see Legislation section above.

#### **14. Referral to the SBNI Board**

The CMR Panel Chair will forward the recommendation of the CMR Panel to the SBNI Board (the Board) in writing. The Board will consider the recommendation and decide whether or not to commission a CMR. The Board may decide to refer the notification back to the CMR Panel for further clarification or reconsideration. For a CMR to be commissioned by the Board, the criteria as set down in 17 (2) (a), (b) (c) and (d) must be met. Please see Legislation section above.

The decision by the Board may be taken at Board meetings. However, the urgency of decision-making may dictate that, in some cases, agreement of Board Members may need to be sought and provided in writing.

#### **15. Confirmation of a CMR**

If a CMR is to be undertaken, the need to complete an IAR, and the nomination of an IAR Author and if appropriate a CMR Team Member will be confirmed by the CMR Panel Chair/Professional Officer.

The Board decision on whether or not to proceed to CMR will be notified in writing to the:

- Department of Health (DoH);
- Chair of the Safeguarding Panel(s) within the area the case relates;
- Notifying Agency;
- Parents/Guardians/Child(ren) if deemed appropriate The SBNI will seek the cooperation of the notifying Agency in this matter so that support is available to family members;
- Other relevant agencies, if appropriate. Where the case involves criminal proceedings or death of a child, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Public Prosecution Service and the Coroner should be copied into the correspondence as appropriate.

If the Board decision is not to endorse a CMR being undertaken and the 'forewarning' process has already started, each Agency will be written to and

requested to 'stand down' the CMR Process. The work already undertaken may be used for other internal processes the Agency may wish to undertake.

## **16. Role of the CMR Panel**

The role of the Panel is to:

- make a recommendation as to whether or not a CMR should be held on the basis of whether Panel Members feel that the criteria have been met;
- determine whether further information is required from the notifying organisation to assist in making that recommendation;
- agree the Terms of Reference and appropriate methodology to be used; if a CMR is recommended;
- regularly review the progress of the CMR against the CMR Case Plan;
- consider progress regarding on-going CMRs;
- ensure that Learning Points in the CMR Overview and Executive Summary Report accurately reflect the facts and findings of the CMR, prior to submission to the Board and agree an appropriate dissemination strategy;
- ensure that the CMR is at all times conducted in accordance with SBNI Regulations and Guidance;
- provide advice on any matter relating to the conduct or quality of CMRs including matters of a data protection matter.

CMR Panel business should be conducted in accordance with CMR Panel Standing Orders (see Appendix Four).

## **17. Role of CMR Panel Chair**

It is the responsibility of the CMR Panel Chair to:

- consider a CMR notification and in conjunction with the Professional Officer and SBNI Chair determine whether more likely than not a notification meets the criteria for a CMR in relation to the 'forewarning' process to Agencies to ensure timeliness of Reviews;
- appoint a CMR Team Chair;
- in cases where other processes are being undertaken, such as a criminal investigation, in consultation with the CMR Team Chair and Professional Officer, meet/liaise with the relevant body to agree a way forward;
- make a recommendation to the Board on whether, in the opinion of the CMR Panel, a CMR should/should not be undertaken;
- agree the composition of the CMR Team in consultation with the CMR Team Chair and Professional Officer;
- in consultation with the Chair of the CMR Team and Professional Officer, produce an individual CMR Case Plan;
- review individual CMRs at regular intervals with CMR Team Chairs and quality assure the work of the CMR Team Chairs;
- undertake regular oversight of the progress of each CMR;
- provide advice to the SBNI Chair, SBNI Officers and the CMR Team Chair in connection with any matter which arises in the course of a particular CMR, including matters of a data protection nature;
- ensure identified learning accurately reflects the facts and findings of the CMR;
- ensure the CMR is at all times conducted in accordance with SBNI Regulations and Guidance;
- advise and seek the approval of the Board as to the findings of the CMR, and the learning points identified;
- along with the CMR Panel, quality assure CMR reports prior to submission to the Board;
- provide regular updates to the CMR Panel and the Board regarding the progress of CMRs and produce an annual summary of progress regarding CMRs for inclusion in the Board's annual report.

## **18. Parental/Child/Young Person Involvement**

If a CMR is commissioned, the parent(s)/guardian(s)/carers and child/young person (if appropriate, depending on age and capacity to understand) will be informed in writing of the decision to hold a CMR. The SBNI will seek the co-operation of the notifying Agency so that support can be made available to family members. The parents and child/young person (if appropriate) will be offered the opportunity to meet with the Chair of the CMR Panel and the Chair of the CMR Team at various stages of the process unless there are valid reasons not to do so, for example, on-going or pending criminal investigations.

At the start of the process the Chair of the CMR Panel and the Chair of the CMR Team will offer to meet the parents and children/young people if appropriate. Liaison with the notifying Agency should take place to ensure that support is available.

The purpose of such contact is to:

- explain the purpose and remit of a CMR, and to discuss the content of the Case Plan and the Terms of Reference of the review;
- agree how the family will be involved in the review process; and
- agree the arrangements for learning of the review conclusions.

Agencies may wish to share the findings of the IAR reports with parent(s) and or children/young people if appropriate, and particularly if such a request is made.

Parents/carers, child/young person may be interviewed by the CMR Team Chair and members of the CMR Team in the process of the Review in consultation with lead agencies. This can provide an opportunity for checking or clarifying information which relates to the child/family.

Parents and if appropriate the child/young person will be offered an opportunity to meet the CMR Panel Chair and CMR Team Chair following the completion of the Reports to:

- discuss the findings/recommendation of the CMR. Parents/children young people's disagreement with the findings/recommendations of the CMR will be considered by the CMR Team Chair and CMR Team;
- outline proposals for the Board to take forward the learning identified;
- share the Executive Summary and advise the family about whether the summary will be publicly available. The SBNI will seek the co-operation of the notifying Agency and/or legal advisors in relation to supporting family members; and
- discuss any possible media interest in the report and data protection issues.

All contact with family members will take into account such issues as race, culture and disability. For example interpreting services will be used to assist with communication if required.

## **19. Appointment of a CMR Team Chair**

The CMR Panel Chair will appoint a CMR Team Chair. The CMR Team Chair will be selected from an expert Panel of CMR Team Chairs who have been recruited, selected and appointed by open competition. The appointment to chair CMRs will be on a rotational basis, be dependent on availability, the nature of the case, the expertise of the Chair and an assessment of the individual's perceived independence to take on the role.

Once appointed, a commissioning meeting will be held with the CMR Team Chair, the CMR Panel Chair and the SBNI Professional Officer to discuss the parameters and expectations of their role.

The CMR Panel Chair in consultation with the CMR Team Chair and SBNI Professional Officer will agree the proposed composition of the CMR Team, draft Terms of Reference and methodology of the review, based on the complexity and nature of the case. The Terms of Reference and methodology of the Review will be

ratified by the CMR Panel. A draft CMR Case Plan will be drawn up and forwarded to relevant Agencies.

## **20. CMR Case Plan**

The CMR Case Plan will provide clarity to Agencies on whether an Individual Agency Review and Report is required, what should be included in the IAR Report, who should sit on the CMR Team, and the timescales for completion of the IAR Report and CMR Report.

The Case Plan should include:

- draft Terms of Reference and scope of the review;
- the appropriate timescales for submission of Individual Agency Review (IAR) Reports if required.
- the timescales for completion of the CMR and submission of both the Overview and Executive Summary Reports;
- how the professionals/agencies involved with the case and relevant bodies will be informed and engaged; and
- whether and how the child and family/carers will be informed and engaged throughout the process.

## **21. Appointment of IAR Authors**

The IAR Authors appointed by Agencies should be at a senior level, have had no prior association with the child/family and currently or during the period under review, have had no direct line management responsibility, for staff involved with the child/family during the period under review. They should have the necessary expertise and experience to critically analyse their Agency's involvement with the child/family and identify relevant learning in the case. Previous training on undertaking IAR's is also preferable.



## **22. IARs and Reports**

Each Represented Body must establish an internal mechanism for the undertaking of CMRs which includes IARs.

The complexity of the review and information already available will dictate whether or not an IAR is undertaken and an IAR Report required. In some cases a summary report focusing on specific issues will be requested rather than a full IAR and IAR Report.

The information provided by the Agency in the IAR Report is a significant part of the CMR and should provide a critical review and reflection regarding the work of the Agency and its involvement with the child/family.

The CMR Team Chair should meet with Individual Agency Reviewers prior to them undertaking the IAR and IAR Report to discuss the review process, clarify the Terms of Reference, confirm what areas should be covered and what staff should be interviewed as part of the IAR process.

The information provided in the IAR Report should follow guidance and the template issued by the SBNI and include a chronology of significant events regarding the Agency's involvement with the child/family, where required, using the Chronolator Tool, and an Action Plan, for the Agency to address any issues highlighted from the IAR.

Staff involved in a CMR can find the process upsetting and stressful. Agencies involved should brief their staff in relation to the CMR and process involved, and identify someone who will provide support to staff throughout.

Upon completion of the IAR and IAR Report, each Agency should consider sharing the report with staff involved for accuracy checking and informing staff of the findings. Providing feedback and debriefing for staff involved could be in the form of a practitioner event led by the Agency or one-to-one sessions with staff in advance of completion of the CMR Reports.

IAR Reports should be endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer of the Agency. The Agency is responsible for certifying that the Report is factually accurate and thorough

and that the recommendations and actions identified in the Report will be acted upon by the Agency.

### **23. Appointment of CMR Team Members**

CMR Team Members appointed by Agencies should have had no prior association with the child/family and currently or during the period under review, have had no direct line management responsibility, for staff involved with the child/family during the period under review. Discussions may take place with individual Agencies regarding nominations, in order to ensure compliance with the principles regarding appropriate independence, as outlined in this Process and Guidance. To facilitate the independence of the review process, Agencies should consider the appointment of external professionals to sit on the CMR Team. Reciprocal arrangements between Agencies should be in place to facilitate the appointment of CMR Team Members. The relevant Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children should be consulted regarding the appointment of a Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children or equivalent when one is required to be a member of the CMR Team.

CMR Team members appointed will conduct the review with impartiality, openness, thoroughness and confidentiality. Those involved in the CMR process should clarify relevant policies or practices in the respective agencies. The Team members will collate and analyse all inputs to the case to enable the Chair and Team to bring forward a report using the SBNI template highlighting the lessons emerging and identify any recommendations for future action.

Members may be appointed to sit on the CMR Team from Agencies who have had no involvement with the child/family to ensure independence and transparency, for example, the NSPCC/Barnardo's NI.

## **24. Role and Responsibilities of CMR Team Chair**

The Chair of the CMR Team must be independent of the case under review and of the organisations whose actions are being reviewed. The Chair once appointed is accountable to the SBNI, through the CMR Panel Chair, for the thoroughness and quality of the final Reports. The Team Chair is expected to:

- brief the CMR Team;
- meet with Individual Agency Reviewers regarding the review process prior to the start of the review and Agency chronology;
- lead the CMR Team in undertaking the CMR;
- along with CMR Team members quality assure IAR reports;
- facilitate a thorough analysis of the case in line with the CMR Case Plan and Terms of Reference;
- in conjunction with the CMR Team, provide the SBNI with an independent Overview and Executive Summary Report which include learning/recommendations of the Review within set timescales as set out in the CMR Case Plan.

## **25. Work of the CMR Team**

The CMR Team led by the CMR Team Chair will undertake the Review in line with the CMR Case Plan. Review Reports will be submitted to the SBNI in accordance with the time-frame outlined in the CMR Case Plan. The maximum period for submission of final reports for more complex Reviews will be six months after the completion of the IAR reports.

The focus of a CMR review is on learning and not about blaming any individual professional involved. The CMR Team will determine whether to access Agency files. The CMR Team will consider whether they need to meet with staff. Meetings/Interviews with relevant staff should not duplicate those undertaken by the IAR Author. The CMR Team should consider identifying key questions for these meetings which should be forwarded beforehand to the relevant staff. Individual staff should be encouraged to cooperate with the CMR Review process by their Agency. The involvement of staff in such discussions can be upsetting and stressful and

therefore Agencies involved should support their staff during this process. Staff may wish to be accompanied by a supportive individual such as another member of staff/their Line Manager, if felt appropriate.

When undertaking the CMR the CMR Team Chair may consider holding a number of learning events: i) a uni-agency meeting of the various disciplines, ii) a meeting of multi-agency practitioners who were involved in the case and iii) a meeting of multi-agency managers and safeguarding/child protection leads. Key questions prepared by the CMR Team Chair should be forwarded beforehand to be discussed at these events which should be held wherever possible on the same day.

These events will assist in providing clarity and inform analysis regarding issues identified in the case.

## **26. Completion of CMR Overview and Executive Summary Reports**

An agreed template will be used for the formulation of both the Overview and Executive Summary to ensure consistency of reporting. The Executive Summary should be written in a way that supports publication of the Report. The learning/recommendations contained in the report should directly relate to the analysis, take account of previous recommendations made by other review processes in the interests of avoiding duplication and be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely (SMART) compliant. The recommendations made by the Team should specify which have wider application than to organisations directly involved with the child and family by identifying those which have regional application.

CMR Overview Reports will be sent to each Agency/Professional (e.g. G.P.) involved for factual accuracy. The findings and conclusions can only be altered if some material fact already in the possession of the CMR Team has been misunderstood or misrepresented.

Legal advice may be sought in relation to content of the CMR Overview and Executive Summary Reports and include any matters relevant to data protection.

The CMR Team Chair will present the case to the CMR Panel. The Panel will quality assure the CMR Overview Report and Executive Summary Report prior to submission to the Board for consideration.

All Reports will be anonymised to ensure the confidentiality of the child and family members. CMR Executive Summaries will be written in such a way to protect individual identities.

## **27. Presentation and Approval by the SBNI**

The CMR Overview Report and Executive Summary Reports will be presented to the Board with an emphasis on the key issues and recommendations rather than summarising the Report. This will be undertaken by the CMR Team Chair or in some instances the CMR Panel Chair. Any advice in relation to legal issues or media handling will also be shared with the Board. The Board will be asked to formally consider and approve the Overview and Executive Summary Report.

The Board will consider the recommendations of the CMR Panel in relation to publication and agree whether the Report should be publicised.

## **28. Sharing the CMR Overview and Executive Summary Reports**

The CMR Overview and Executive Summary Reports are the property of the SBNI. The Overview Report contains highly sensitive and confidential information and therefore the sharing of this Report must be undertaken within the framework of confidentiality and data protection.

The Chief Executive of contributing agencies will receive a copy of the final Overview and Executive Summary Report. Each Agency has a responsibility to ensure staff

involved are briefed about the CMR conclusions and recommendations and that any learning from the CMR is disseminated within their Agency. Two weeks following initial sharing with Agencies directly involved, the Executive Summary Report will be forwarded to the Safeguarding Panel Chairs for information and local dissemination of the learning. This is to allow those Agencies involved, time to brief their staff.

The Report(s) will also be shared with key stakeholders as appropriate, in accordance with Memorandum of Understandings that are in place, for example the DoH, Inspection Bodies and the HSCB. It should be made clear whether or not the Executive Summary has been made public to maintain confidentiality.

Agencies involved with the child/family should not discuss the CMR with the media without consultation with the SBNI.

## **29. Publication of the CMR Executive Summary Report**

The CMR process should be open and transparent. In consequence of undertaking CMRs the general public should have greater confidence that the child protection system is operating as intended for the benefit of children/young people, and that where improvements could be made processes exist to identify these.

Ordinarily Executive Summaries will be published in order to:

- ensure that a wide range of organisations and professionals are able to incorporate the learning from CMRs into their own systems, processes and practice; and
- inform the wider public about the difficult lives that some children lead to foster the culture that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility.

In doing so the SBNI will always act in such a way as to:

- protect the identity of children/young people, whether alive or deceased;
- protect the identity of family members; and

- protect the identity of individual practitioners.

Discussions regarding the publication of the Executive Summary Report will involve liaison with the respective Agencies involved. Agencies will be informed as to whether or not it is intended to publish an Executive Summary Report. Each Agency has a responsibility to ensure that staff involved are briefed about the conclusions and recommendations of the CMR prior to publication of the Executive Summary Report.

In some instances where other processes, such as a criminal investigation or a coroner's hearing are on-going, the Executive Summary will not be published until these other processes have been concluded. In these circumstances the Executive Summary Report may be issued with restrictions.

### **30. Action Planning**

Action Plans will be completed by IAR Authors in relation to taking forward recommendations made by their respective Agencies. The Action Plan must be approved by the Agency's Chief Executive before they are submitted to the SBNI as part of the IAR Report. These actions will be considered by the CMR Team in relation to the learning in the case.

Once the CMR Overview and Executive Summary Reports have been approved by the SBNI, relevant Agencies, pertinent to the delivery of a recommendation included in the Review will be requested to formulate an individual Action Plan that will outline how they propose to address the issues identified in the recommendation and to forward these Plans to the Board within four weeks. Action Plans are for those issues that can be considered and dealt with in a manner that allows more time to address the learning and how best to benefit from it. They could identify other agencies which might be involved. Each Agency identified in relation to a recommendation is responsible and accountable for the delivery of Actions and

should report on the progress of these directly to the SBNI Chair, on a quarterly basis.

### **31. Role of Safeguarding Panels**

Each Executive Summary, once approved, will be forwarded to the Safeguarding Panel Chairs for information and local dissemination of learning.

For those Actions that have a localised theme, the Safeguarding Panel will, through its CMR sub-committee, monitor the implementation of these Actions. Each CMR sub-committee will report on progress against agreed actions to the Safeguarding Panel as a standing item on the Panel agenda.

The Safeguarding Panel Chair will provide an update to the Chair of the SBNI regarding CMR activity.

Safeguarding Panels for areas that have not been involved in a CMR, should consider the learning and recommendations from each Executive Summary Report and decide whether the issues identified are applicable to their area and decide how best to take learning forward. This will ensure that learning is disseminated and implemented across the region.

### **32. Interface with Other Processes**

Where concerns exist about the standard of practice of individual professionals, these matters will be dealt with by employers and professional bodies separate to the SBNI and the CMR process.

It is important that a CMR proceeds promptly so as to maximise the opportunities for learning, whilst also being mindful of the potential to compromise the work of parallel statutory processes. How the CMR process interfaces with other processes should



be considered on a case by case basis and be undertaken in accordance with Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs).

Where other proceedings are taking place, such as a criminal investigation, comprehensive discussions should take place at an early stage between the SBNI through the CMR Panel Chair and the relevant bodies to agree a way forward to ensure that the CMR process neither inadvertently interferes with nor conflicts with those proceedings. In exceptional circumstances legal advice can be sought.

The SBNI will liaise with the PSNI/Public Prosecution Service (PPS)/Coroner in respect of any on-going criminal investigation and agree the arrangements for the CMR Team Chair to be kept apprised about developments.

In relation to the Serious Adverse Incident (SAI) process used in the Health and Social Care sector, any SAI process implemented in regard to a particular child, should be suspended pending completion of a CMR. The Professional Officer will notify the SAI process of a CMR being undertaken and when it has been completed. The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP), when established, may also notify a case to the SBNI for consideration of a CMR. (Likewise the CMR Panel can also notify a case to CDOP if a case is felt not to meet the criteria for a CMR).

### **33. Quality Assurance of CMR Reports**

This involves:

- an initial review by the CMR Panel Chair and Professional Officer;
- factual accuracy check by the Agencies that contributed to the CMR;
- legal advice if deemed appropriate;
- Review by the CMR Panel and, in particular, a determination whether the Terms of Reference for the Review have been addressed.

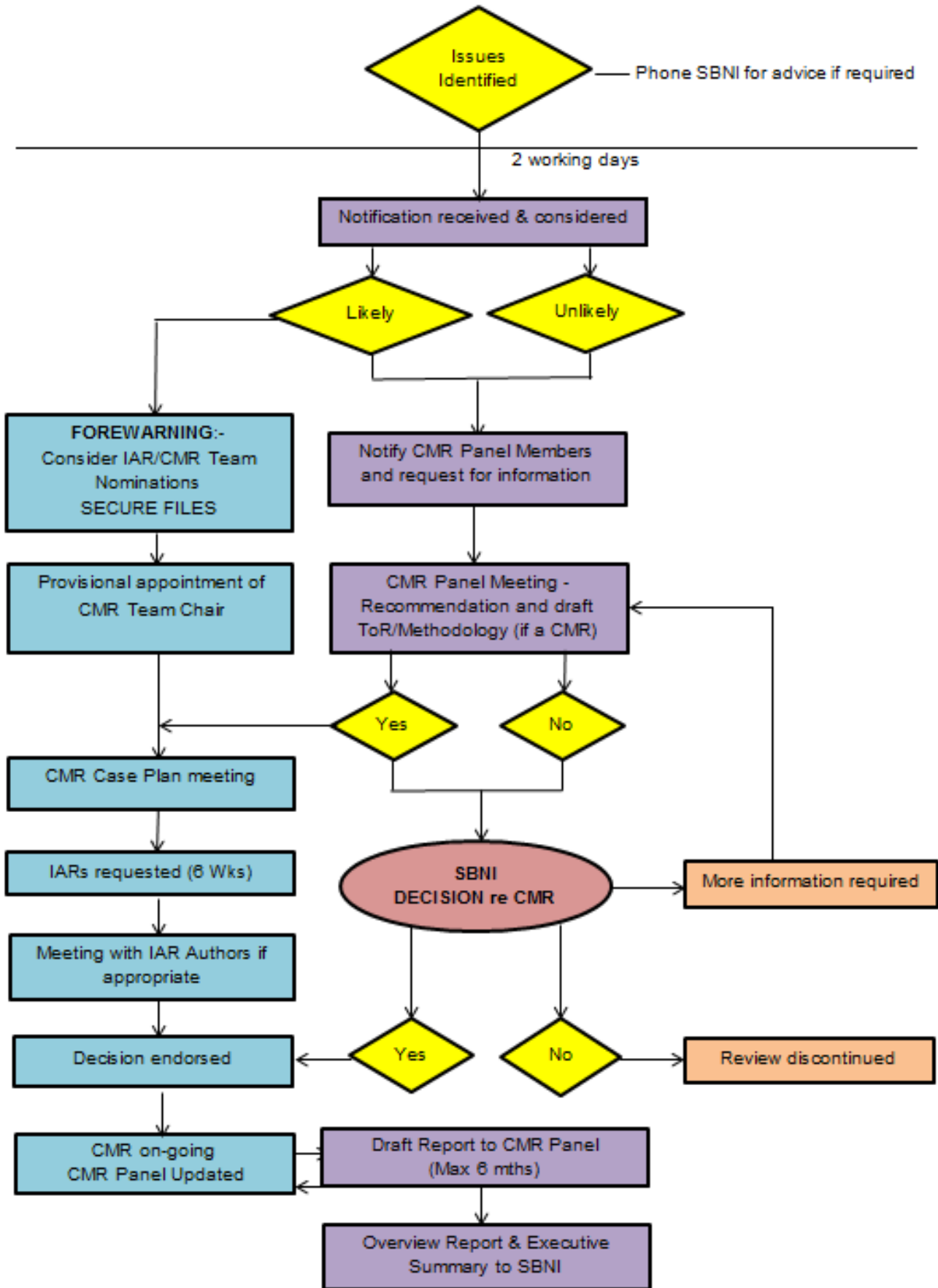
### **34. Dissemination of Learning**

A Strategy for how the learning is disseminated from CMRs by the SBNI has been developed. Please refer to this Strategy.

### **35. Records Management and Retention**

All records created or used during the CMR Process will be managed and retained in accordance with the SBNI's Records Management Policy.

## SBNI CMR Process



## Appendix Two

A copy of the official CMR notification form can be viewed by clicking the link below:

<http://www.safeguardingni.org/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/imce/Case%20Management%20Review%20Official%20Notification%20Form%20V%201.0%20-%20pdf.pdf>

## Appendix Three

Is child/family known to your Agency?



**Case Reference Number:**

**Case Pseudonym:**

**Referral Agency:**

You are requested to undertake checks of relevant Agency data bases for information held in relation to services provided to the child/family. If the child/family is known, please provide details of the Agency's involvement and, whether there are any issues identified regarding how Agencies worked together along with any other relevant information.

Is the child(ren) and/or family known to your organisation?

Yes  No:

If you have answered yes, please give details below:

Is child/family known to your Agency?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix Four

### CASE MANAGEMENT REVIEW PANEL (CMR) STANDING ORDERS

#### 1. Meetings

Meetings shall be in accordance with Regulation 36 of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (Membership, Procedure, Functions and Committee) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012.

The first meeting of the CMR panel shall be held on such day and at such place as may be fixed by the Chair, and he shall be responsible for convening the meeting. The CMR panel meetings are not open to members of the public.

The CMR Panel shall meet at least four times each year. The Chair may call a meeting of the CMR Panel at any time. If a requisition for a meeting, signed by at least three quarters of the members is presented to the Chair, the Chair must within 14 days after the requisition has been presented to him, call a meeting unless the reason for not calling the meeting has been approved by the Safeguarding Board. At the meeting of the CMR Panel the Chair, shall preside.

#### 2. Setting the Agenda

The CMR Panel may determine or may be directed to ensure that certain matters shall appear on every agenda for a meeting of the Panel and shall be addressed prior to any other business being conducted. If so determined these matters shall be listed as an appendix to the Standing Orders.

A member desiring a matter to be included on an agenda shall normally make his/her request in writing to the Chair at least 14 clear days before the

meeting. The request may include appropriate supporting information and a proposed motion. Requests made less than 14 days before a meeting may be included on the agenda at the discretion of the Chair.

The agenda and supporting papers shall be despatched to members 7 days in advance of the meeting.

**3. Notice of Meetings**

Before each meeting of the CMR Panel, a notice of the meeting, specifying the business proposed to be transacted at it and signed by the Chair or by a person authorised by the Chair to sign on his/her behalf shall be delivered at least 7 days before the meeting. The proceedings of any meeting shall not be invalidated by a failure to serve notice to any member.

**4. Deputies**

Deputising arrangements for Panel members is permitted only in exceptional circumstances and with prior agreement with the Chair. Where a member does not attend on 2 consecutive occasions in any 12-month period, the Chair of the Panel should ascertain the reasons for the absence.

**5. Attendance of member representatives**

With the prior agreement of the Chair, Officers representing the Panel members may attend the CMR Panel if there to present a particular issue as on behalf of their agency. These Officers will have no speaking or voting rights.

**6. Chair of Meeting**

At any meeting of the CMR Panel, the Chair shall preside. There is no appointment of a Deputy Chair.



## **7. Voting**

Every decision at a meeting shall be determined by a majority of the votes of the members present and voting on the question and, in the case of equality of votes, the Chair shall have a second and casting vote.

The names of members present at a meeting shall be recorded.

## **8. Quorum**

In exceptional circumstances where more than one third of the total membership declares an interest, the quorum requirement will be satisfied if two thirds (rounded up to a whole number) of the remaining members are present. If the meeting is not quorate the Chair shall convene a further meeting within a period of one month.

## **9. Declaration of interest**

If the Chair or a member of the CMR Panel has an interest in any matter to be considered at a meeting or is associated with a person who has such an interest he shall declare it accordingly at the meeting and as soon as practicable after its commencement.

The Chair or any member who has, declared an interest shall not take part in the consideration and discussion of the matter or be present at the consideration or discussion of that matter or the voting on it.

## **10. Minutes**

The Minutes of the proceedings of a meeting shall be drawn up and submitted for agreement at the next ensuing meeting where they will be signed by the Chair. Draft minutes will be circulated promptly to all members of the Panel (within 21 working days).

No discussion shall take place upon the minutes except upon their accuracy or where the Chair considers discussion appropriate. Any amendment to the minutes shall be agreed and recorded at the next meeting.

Minutes shall be circulated in accordance with SBNI Information Governance Policies.