

7 Minute Practice Briefing: Multi-Agency Learning Circle March 2023

Learning point 9: Professionals are reminded of the importance of accurate and timely record keeping for a child, young person, or family members they are working with.

In this case, there was conflicting information across Health and Children's Social Care systems in terms of the dates of strategy discussions as well as whether mum was present at these.

What is being done by the PDSCP to address this?

This communication forms part of regular communication and assessment through single and multi-agency quality assurance activity to ensure that professionals are adequately recording information.

Learning point 10: Professionals are reminded of the importance of recognizing the nuances between a young person being a victim and an individual who causes harm to others.

In this case, the presenting behaviours of the young person were seen by professionals as evidence of this young person being a perpetrator, and they did not explore the reasons for this behavior.

What is being done by the PDSCP to address this?

This communication acts as a reminder to professionals to the reasons why a young person appears to be causing harm to others.

Learning point 8: Professionals should be reminded that where they are working with uncertainty/lack of a disclosure from a young person around possible sexual abuse that they have experienced, they should focus on identifying and mapping the signs and indicators of abuse.

What is being done by the PDSCP to address this?

A Dorset Multi-Agency Sexual Abuse toolkit is being developed and is due to be launched in September 2023. This includes resources such as the [Signs and Indicators tool developed by the Centre of Expertise for CSA](#) to support practitioners in identifying signs and indicators of abuse.

Learning point 6: Professionals should be reminded that a young person's presenting behaviors may be masking the impacts of trauma or abuse they have experienced.

What is being done by the PDSCP to address this?

This communication forms part of regular communication and assessment through multi-agency quality assurance activity to ensure that professionals are adequately investigating and demonstrating curiosity in response to a young person's presenting behaviors, in terms of exploring any possible trauma they may have experienced.

Learning point 7: Professionals should be reminded of using the correct pathway for providing care and protection to a young person, in terms of where there may be intra-familial safeguarding concerns as well as concerns of exploitation or extra-familial harm.

What is being done by the PDSCP to address this?

The PDSCP are strengthening the arrangements in relation to pathways for support, including an extra-familial harm strategy and revision of the Dorset CE risk assessment.

Background

A learning circle took place in Dorset in March 2023 in relation to a young person. The learning centers around how multi-agency professionals responded to this young person where there were concerns that they were being sexually exploited. This followed an admission to hospital where they presented with a sexually transmitted infection.

This practice briefing aims to support professionals working with children and families across all statutory and voluntary agencies with the key learning from this learning circle, as well as identifying what has already been done and the work currently underway by the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children's Partnership to address this learning.



Learning Point 1: Further clarity is required around the support that can be provided to young people where there is an ongoing police investigation.

It was highlighted in this review that professionals working with this young person had been unsure about what supportive work they could complete with them and their family during an ongoing police investigation.

What is being done by the PDSCP to address this?

Dorset Police have developed their own [7-minute briefing](#) to provide clarity on what non-police professionals should and should not do when working with a child or young person where there is an ongoing police investigation. The key message is that safeguarding a young person is the priority.

Learning point 2: Professionals should be tenacious and curious about speaking to those that are important to the child and ensuring the child or young person's voice is captured.

What is being done by the PDSCP to address this?

This communication forms part of regular communication and assessment through multi-agency quality assurance activity to ensure that professionals are adequately capturing the voice of the child or young person and are using this to inform their decision making.

Learning point 3: Professionals should be mindful that their decision-making is not influenced by a parent/carers' own professional status.

Professionals should be reminded that they should be applying the same standards and expectations of professional parents/carers to non-professional parents/carers. Professionals should not assume that parents/carers with a professional status automatically understand the advice and guidance being provided to them around safeguarding their child(ren).

What is being done by the PDSCP to address this?

The PDSCP training offer is being reviewed to ensure that it effectively captures consideration of 'professional bias' and individual agencies are being requested to check that their own internal safeguarding training also includes this.

Learning point 4: Professionals should be reminded to utilize tools and resources available on the PDSCP website in relation to families where engagement is more difficult, such as the [Dorset Multi-Agency Engaging Families Toolkit](#)

What is being done by the PDSCP to address this?

The PDSCP are re-promoting the existing resources and tools available to practitioners on the PDSCP website.

Learning point 5: Professionals should be reminded that anyone with concerns about another professional working with children and young people can refer to the LADO. Professionals should also be reminded that 'transferable risk' is a criteria for referring to the LADO.

What is being done by the PDSCP to address this?

The PDSCP have developed a separate [7-minute briefing on the role of the LADO](#) and reminding practitioners what transferable risk is and when to refer their concerns.