

# Signs of Safety Newsletter

Hello, and welcome to the eighth Signs of Safety (SofS) newsletter. We intend to use the newsletter to keep you in touch with any news and developments which relate to our implementation of Signs of Safety.

## COUNT DOWN TO OUR SofS GO LIVE DATE: 1 week!

### Message from your Service Director

Colleagues, The development, implementation and embedding of SofS is the central element of our approach to working effectively with rather than doing to children and families.

I am impressed by and appreciative of the work that has taken place both to lead and guide the implementation and how it has been embraced by staff. We already see in our quality assurance work how SofS is impacting positively on practice and we are now at a crucial point of our development with the module going live this month.

It is important that we maintain our focus on continuously improving the quality of our practice across all of social care in line with our leadership pledge and using, embedding and developing SofS is critical to making sure we are doing our best with and for our children, young people and their families.



### Top Tips

1. Leave more time than you normally would, to write the timeline.
2. Use more words to describe who is doing what, don't be too succinct.
3. Focus on networks, try to get as many people as possible around the table from the network to help the family think through the worries to form plans for their everyday living arrangements.
4. Remember your EARS...Elicit, Amplify, Reflect, Start Over. Signs of Safety is a questioning approach, if you want to make a statement STOP and ask another question!



### New training dates

The first phase of training has now finished. So many of you were able to access the sessions which is excellent, and we hope they have been useful.

The dates for the next phase (May-July) are now on Learning Together ready for you to book.

This includes:


- 12-hour programme
- 3-hour programme
- Safety planning workshop
- Timeline and trajectory workshop
- Analysing harm workshop
- Pre-recorded bitesize webinars (coming soon)



Please check the [training matrix](#) before you book, so you are booking onto the most appropriate course for your role.

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## HOW IS THE SERVICE CHANGING IN RESPONSE TO SIGNS OF SAFETY?

“

We are **here to help you** through this process.

**Ask us** - We can support you if you have any questions or queries.

**PAUL THOMPSON AND MEL ATKINS**

signsofsafety@northumberland.gov.uk

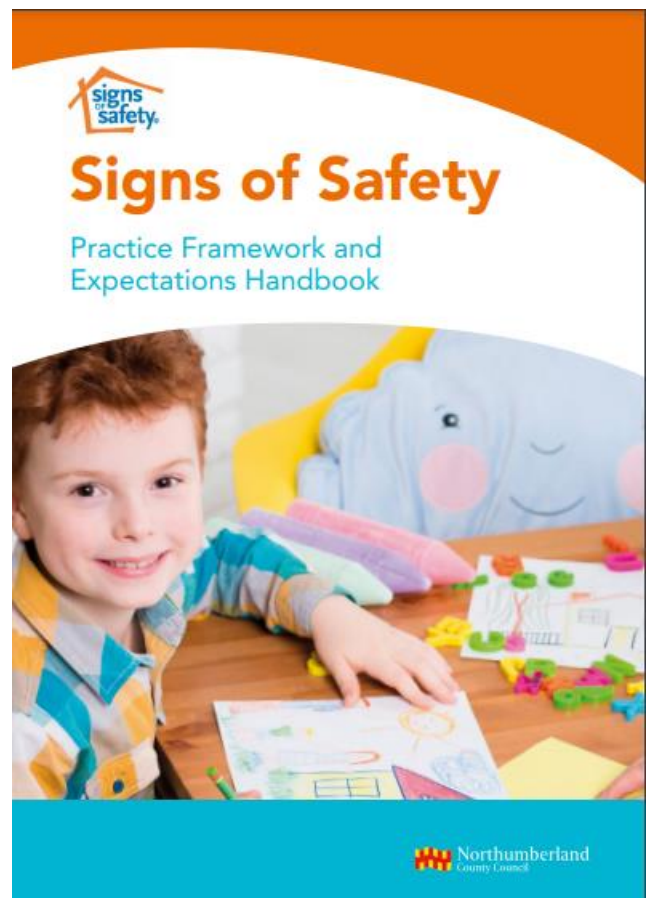


**PRACTICE  
LEADS**

### New practice handbook

We have now launched our Signs of Safety practice framework and expectations handbook as we move closer to our system and practice go live date. The handbook sets out the vision of the service and what we want to achieve. It explains how the model will fit across all our teams in our service and will be your working document to guide you in day-to-day practice, with clear practice expectations and bottom lines written by practitioners. The handbook can be found on [Trix](#) and through the SofS [SharePoint](#).

This will be a useful reference document for us all and we would encourage you to bookmark this on your browser for easy access.



**The handbook will be developed further, to include all services within Children's Social Care.**

**This will take place from May when the Practice Leads continue their support to teams as part of their trajectory.**

### Message from your Practice Leads

In the past month Paul and Mel have been finishing up the training schedule and have been able to get great numbers on all the workshops and 2-day training. We hope that this will help workers feel more prepared for what they will see when the new forms are launch.


Paul and Mel have continued to support with advice to individual workers in the teams, given advice on danger statements and safety goals, working out a timeline and even chairing a core group using the new format.

Paul and Mel have cleared time in the month following the Go Live date to be available to support with all areas of practice and navigating the new forms so please don't struggle, reach out and ask and we can offer one to one and team support in specific practice areas.

We are also continuing to build our own resource through the SharePoint and so please also remember that is there to look at good examples. One of the things that we know can be helpful when you first start to talk to families about Signs of Safety practice is to show them examples too and there are some great anonymised resources on the Signs of Safety knowledge bank.

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## NEXT STEPS...

Our practice and system implementation takes place next week.

### What should I do before 20th April?

- On your last working day before the implementation, you are strongly advised to save all your work in the system.
- Any forms that you have been working in will still be available after the go live date, in the current format. Only the new Signs of Safety forms that are started after the go live date will be in a "Signs of Something" format.
- Please make sure the contact details for families and carers you are working with are up to date in EHM and LCS. A report is produced that reflects information in the system which can be accessed when the system is shut down, which the systems team and the ERA have access to. Teams should now be thinking about their own contingency plans in place so you can still access addresses, contact details etc. you need when the system shuts down.

### What will happen on 20th April?

- The live system will be shut down on 20th April so that Liquidlogic can install our system upgrade. We do not know how long this will take, it could be the morning, the full day or longer.
- Once the upgrade has been received, the system team will complete a period of testing to make sure the new forms and workflows are as we expect. **During this time, it is important that you do not try to access the live system, this could affect the upgrade process and your work will not be saved.**
- Once the live system is ready for access, you will be notified by email.
- Your login details for EHM or LCS will not change.

### What happens after the 20th of April?

- You will still be able to access previous documents, case notes and forms in the upgraded system. Only new workflow forms that are started following the upgrade, will be in the new Signs of Safety format.
- From the go live date we will expect that everyone will start to transition to the new forms at the next planned review, for example when a TAF, Care Team or Core Group meeting takes place, or when a C+F assessment needs to be updated or a CLA review meeting is completed.
- We expect that within 6 months (by October 2021) all workflow forms and case recording, for open cases in Early Help and statutory services, will be in a Signs of Safety format.


## NEED SUPPORT?

If you need support during the go live period, there is help available:

1. Speak to your Practice Champion(s), they should be your first point of contact.
2. If it is a system query, check the system crib sheets on Tri.x they will guide you through the changes in the system or speak to a member of your team that attended one of the practice IT alignment workshops.
3. If you still need assistance, please email the ICS helpdesk.
4. If you have a question about the new forms, please check the form guidance document on Tri.x.
5. If you have a question about "Signs of Something" practice, contact our Practice Leads- [signsofsafety@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:signsofsafety@northumberland.gov.uk)
6. If you have a question about the implementation plan, please send your question to the SofS mailbox.

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## What's new to the EHM and LCS system with the implementation of Signs of Safety?

The systems team have prepared two helpful documents to guide you through the changes to forms that will be changing with our implementation.

[EHM](#)  
[LCS](#)

**We would encourage you to look at this as a team before the go live, in your preparation.**

## Multi-agency referral form (MARF)

For the last 12 months we have been working with services within social care, and partner agencies, to build their understanding and confidence to use Sign of Safety in their work with families.

So, we have a single route of referrals into Children's Social Care, either for Early Help support or statutory services, we have developed a new multi-agency referral form (MARF).

This is now live- The link to the web-based form is [HERE](#) and the top tips to consider when considering a referral can be accessed, [HERE](#). These can be downloaded and shared. The details of the MARF have also been included on the staff intranet, NCC Signs of Safety information and safeguarding internet pages.

**Thank you to everybody that was part of developing the MARF and its final testing.**

## How well are we doing?

We are always keen to understand your views on how we have communicated information about our implementation journey over the last 12 months. For us to improve, we would be grateful if you could spend 5 minutes completing this short [survey](#).

**If you have any feedback or would like to share an update in future newsletters, please contact [Catherine MacDonald](#).**

## Useful information and links

- ✓ Our previous [newsletters](#) include information on elements of the model, top tips as well as our journey so far.
- ✓ Our Signs of Safety guide for families and professionals can be found [HERE](#).
- ✓ The list of all the forms that will be in a SofS format from 20th April 2021, can be found [HERE](#).
- ✓ A list of all the Practice Champions across the service can be found [HERE](#).
- ✓ We have a Signs of Safety [resource bank](#), that everybody can access to share learning. If you have examples, please email them to the SofS mailbox and we will add it to the bank.
- ✓ There are lots of **free** resources, tools and information available, to anybody without a licence, on the [Knowledge Bank](#) for all areas of the service.
- ✓ If there is something specific that you want to access which is restricted, please contact one of the licence holders who will happily help. A list of all SofS Knowledge Bank licence holders can be found [HERE](#). They can share resources with you.
- ✓ Use the SofS [Facebook group](#) to hear practice examples, Q+A, and periodically there are videos shared and live sessions.

If you have a question about any aspect of the SofS implementation project plan, please direct this to the SofS mailbox: [signsofsafety@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:signsofsafety@northumberland.gov.uk)

# Phase 2

## implementation plan

Our implementation does not end once we reach the go live date on 20<sup>th</sup> April, we will move straight into our phase 2 plan. If you are interested in what this looks like, you can see the proposed plan on the SofS SharePoint from the go live date.

This plan will start from the go live date.

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