

## Top Tips for Service Areas: Quality Assurance Monthly audits

This document provides brief guidance on auditing case files held in different service areas. For additional information specific to these service areas, please speak to the authors noted.

### MASH

- **MASH is a consent-based model** – Consent should always be recorded and considered before decision making – by the referrer and then by the social worker with parent/ carer who holds PR or on the basis of risk to the child override consent to ensure partnership can add value and contribute to decision making process
- Read the analysis  
(review of presenting concerns and previous involvement/concerns/outcome)
- Read the Social Worker recommendation **and** manager's decision and rationale - Evidence of using Levels of Need descriptors to inform analysis of need, harm and risk?
- Agency information sharing is adding value to the gaps identified by the social worker in the MASH.
- If in doubt, ask a MASH manager for guidance.

### Assessment

- When auditing a case within Child and Family assessment it is important to note that information being actively gathered will either be in: Case notes – to then collate and put in the child and family assessment or within the subject child or youngest sibling's assessment
- There will only be one assessment open per family as we work on one child either subject child or youngest siblings – this then allows for other Children's assessment to be copied over when completed
- Worker is using an impact chronology
- All assessments are quality assured - this document will be uploaded to documents once an assessment has been signed off
- Important notes that should be included in all assessments:
  1. The child's voice – evidence of direct work in narrative, or comprehensive observations of the child
  2. The home environment should be observed and commented upon
  3. Parents views and if a parent hasn't been consulted a note as to why i.e. absent parent, abusive history
  4. Support networks of a family
  5. Agency checks from at least health and education dependent on the age of a child and their involved agencies
  6. All cases should have an initial review and second review in the assessment document/case notes
  7. Parent/child factors of assessment need to be completed identifying the category re referral reason
  8. Consent for agency checks should be explicit/either in case notes or a form uploaded to documents.

- Supervision for each case held in Mosaic should have supervision uploaded into case notes with a review of the case and outstanding actions noted
- Assessment timeframe: Assessment team works to 35 days completion; can go up to 45 days for Child and Family Assessment.

## Disability

1. Many cases appropriately remain open to the Disability team on a long-term basis. Is there an up to date assessment on the child's file which is child centred and family focused? The disabled child's diagnosis, their needs and their support requirements should be clearly documented and updated. The assessment and plan should contain evidence of how the child's impairments impact on their functioning and the impact this has on family life.
2. Does the assessment and review indicate the Social Worker has a sound understanding of the child's communication style/skills? NB Many disabled children supported by the team are nonverbal or do not communicate primarily through speech but through their behaviour. There should be evidence of behavioural observation – preferably in different settings especially in longer term cases. Is there evidence of any understanding of the child's sensory needs and the impact these have on their behaviours? Have differing hypotheses for the child's behaviour been considered and thought through? Is there evidence that the Social Worker knows what the child is feeling and how s/he is experiencing their life?
3. Does robust information sharing take place between agencies and services during assessment, planning and review? Social Worker may show you evidence re the quality and rigour of the information sharing in case notes as well as assessments and CIN/CP/CLA reviews and in documents. Case notes are a rich source of evidence in disability case audits. Who is consulted/asked for information? Who is missed out and why? Check the analysis of complex and conflicting information and the weighting given to information from different organisations, especially if there is professional disagreement.
4. In most CIN cases only the disabled child is open to the team: many parents do not want siblings open to CSC. The assessment should, however, consider the impact the child's disability has on siblings. Both assessment and review should include sufficient attention to the needs of siblings.
5. Is there an up to date plan on file which is child centred and family focused? Are there any specific factors that increase risk and how are these managed safely? Does the plan address all identified concerns eg addressing Health and Safety concerns including environmental safety and appropriate equipment, and challenging poor care impacting on child outcomes? Does the plan address all identified concerns and is it clear what needs to change, who will undertake actions and when these will be addressed?
6. The child's plan should include details re Social Worker visiting frequency. Other provider services eg C&F Care Services staff, CAMHS may also be visiting the child at home: evidence of this will be found in case notes as well as review meetings. How are the observations from different professionals being collated/analysed to inform the understanding of the child's/children's perspective of family life? The parent's perspective may dominate: important to make sure there is evidence that the Social Worker's understanding of the child's needs is not mediated entirely through their parent/s. How have the child's voice/wishes/feelings

influenced the plan? This should become more evident in reviews because it may take time to understand the child's communication.

## Family Support and Protection

- Key documents: case work supervision (found in case notes) – for case direction – check are directions being followed – case notes will also display the nature of contacts with agency and information coming into worker and often provides the spine of case
- Last core group for CIN and CP outcomes and multi-agency associated actions
- Up to date assessment in last CP report and last CP conference – updates in plans in CP episodes and core groups
- Key tools used will be in documents – for Neglect would expect to neglect tool and Graded Care Profile – check for impact or multi-agency chronology
- Assessments on LD – will be titled PAM
- Significant events chronology – should give key events (check sibling records) as at times events not copied over – is history repeating?
- Focus on last six months and be mindful of ages/stages of children – is change being achieved within their time scales
- Check whether CP and CIN visit recording is timely, and inclusive of all children's voices in household; have children been spoken to individually or together as sibling group?
- Check whether, if co-working with REOC/other related teams, that joint supervision is taking place
- Check whether, if CIN case held by EH team worker, that case supervision is provided by a statutory manager
- Check whether discussion in supervision & case planning is relevant to overarching CIN/CP plan outcomes

## Children Looked After

### Assessment

Locate the most recent 'CLA review' (first second or subsequent) and open the 'Social worker report for CLA review' to locate the assessment details. Usually reviews should take place at 1 month, 4 month and then 6 monthly form becoming a CLA.

If 16 – 18 years old, locate the 'Pathway plan'. Whilst the Needs Assessment form is being updated the pathway plan should include detailed analysis of the care planning areas.

### Planning

0 – 16: Locate the most recent care plan.

*The planning should evidence that permanence has been considered and actions support the child's journey.* If reunification is the plan, then assessments and objectives should evidence this.

16 – 18 years old, locate the most recent pathway plan.

*The planning should evidence EET and consideration to transitioning / independence.*

### Review

The report should be in letter form to the Child Looked After and Care Leaver.

**Reflection**

In case notes locate most recent 'Record of Supervision Discussion' or in documents locate the most recent uploaded Record of Supervision

**Care Leavers - 18 +**

1. Look for the **Pathway Plan**- this is the key document which should outline the work and plan for the care leaver. You are looking to evidence:
  - It is up to date- should be updated every 6 months
  - It has been completed with the care leaver
  - It is aspirational for the young person
  - There is a good action plan that is proactive and forward looking
  - It is not just a repeat of all the reasons why the care leaver came into care years before.
2. Evidence of partnership working- this can be with the housing support worker or any other key agency that is supporting the care leaver
3. Note date of last recorded visit.
4. Evidence that s/he has been discussed in supervision in last 3 months.

<b>Review / Contacts / References</b>	
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