

# Transfer and Allocation between Children’s Services at Complex (Prevention and Youth Justice, Leaving Care or Children with Disabilities Services) and Child in Need Acute (Children’s Social Care)

Head of Service – Prevention & Youth Justice

Head of Service – Help & Protect

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## 1. Introduction and Purpose

This internal to CSC protocol is intended to provide clarity about the process for transfer between teams to support consistent practice across the county.

The services provided within Somerset County Council Children's Services should all align with: [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance](#)

***The Effective Support document in Somerset defines four levels of need. This guidance note seeks to address internal transfers and allocations. The Effective Support document can be found on the Somerset Safeguarding Children (SSCP) website, [Effective Support for Children and Families in Somerset - Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)***

For some children, a referral into a social work team for a Child and Family Assessment may be necessary, even though the outcome may be for the child (and their family) to continue to receive intervention from a non-social work service.

## 2. Transfer and Allocation Meetings (TAM)

The decision making around where the child/family's needs are best met should be made in consultation and collaboration between Children's Social Care Social Work (SW) teams and:

- Prevention teams (Family Intervention Service (FIS),
- Youth Justice Team (YJT),
- Preventing Exploitation Team (PEXT),
- Leaving Care (LC) Team,
- Children with Disabilities Early Support Service (CwD EES).

Ordinarily this will be via the Transfer and Allocation Meeting (TAM) for children already receiving a service unless a need for urgent step up to Child Protection for safeguarding reasons is apparent.

Each operational area team will use a consistent format to track and record the weekly TAM in terms of children discussed, decisions and actions in addition to the outcome form on LCS/EHM.

### **Agreed & Standardised agenda:**

1: Prevention transfers (between FIS including young carers, YJT, CWD ESS, PEXT, Kinship)

2: Safer families (Once a month)

3: Step-up/Down to / from Assessment Teams

4: Internal statutory transfer & allocations

**New children and families for discussion at TAM should be added to the agenda at least 24 hours before the meeting is held so teams have time to check records and prepare.**

**TAM OneNote agenda format sections:**

- Safer families
- YC
- Prevention
- Step up to CSC
- Step down from CSC
- Internal CSC Social Work team transfers

**Discussions outside of TAM meeting:**

- Team Leader and/or Team Manager to record case notes on their relevant system to track decision and actions from TAM and any urgent case discussions.
- Area Team Leaders for FIS, PExT, CWD ESS, can initiate a case consultation with an Area Team Manager (ATM) when they feel oversight or advice is required.
- When consultation is required for **immediate safeguarding concerns**, the Team Leader will contact the Assessment Team Manager informing them of the urgency.
- When consultation is required for children and families requiring social work oversight, but is not for immediate step-up, the Team Leader will request consultation outside of TAM. This needs to take place within 1 working day.
- Team Managers at the Family Front Door may be contacted by Assessment Team Managers to seek assistance as necessary.

### 3. Step-Up

- When risk and needs have escalated or changed to the point a referral to a social work service or a transfer to a more appropriate service is required – TAM discussion to take place.
- A Step-Up form details risks, needs and strengths, work completed so far, outcome of the work, and records the decision made and rationale in the meeting.
- Relevant managers will be clear about application of threshold at point of requesting a step-up.
- The request for step-up/step in transfer form should be completed by the Team Leader, or Professional Practitioner with supervisory responsibility. This should take place following a discussion or supervision about the child with the Intervention Worker. This should be shared one working day ahead of the TAM for the Social Work Team Manager to make any enquires they need prior to TAM.

- Social Work Team Manager will create the contact and referral record using the information from the Step-Up form shared at TAM.

#### **Following the TAM and agreeing Step-Up:**

- Step-up form on EHM to be triggered by area team leader (For FIS)
- A social worker will visit the family, child or young person alongside the FIS, YJT, PExT, LC / CwD ESS worker to help build relationships, case responsibility will transfer at the meeting (no return to TAM needed).

#### **4. Step Up request, outcome that Step in is required**

- A step in should take place within 2 weeks of it being agreed. It should then return for further discussion at the next relevant area TAM for ratification of the decision.
- Team Leaders will bring children and families for discussion to TAM with a date/time for step-in
- Record as a step-in on EHM /LCS as a case note type by the FIS, YJT, PExT, LC or CwD ESS Team Leader or Professional Practitioner who brought the case to TAM with explanatory narrative comment.
- Follow below process.

#### **5. Step In**

- For a social worker to offer advice and guidance to a FIS, YJT, PExT, LC or CwD ESS worker and the family / young person or to confirm the needs in the family whilst not requesting a formal step-up at this point.
- The outcome of a step-in could still be a formal step-up to social care or for FIS, YJT, PExT, LC /CWD ESS worker to continue working or other action.
- The step-in case note type should be used to record such a meeting, with information copied from the step-up/step in transfer form and updated as necessary by the allocated practitioner on EHM or Pathways and the Social Worker on LCS.
- Any step-in should come back to the next TAM for confirmation of outcome and agree any actions.

#### **6. Urgent Step-Up due to immediate safeguarding concerns**

- Practitioners will always try to support the family to engage with a social work colleague, where necessary e.g. completing a joint visit.
- The area Team Leader will speak with the area Assessment Team Manager to facilitate a swift transfer and pick up.
- Practitioners can remain involved in supporting the family or young person during the transfer period with Team Leader agreement (or with OM authorisation the allocated worker can have a role in the CIN/CP plan).

- Team Managers at the Family Front Door may be contacted by Assessment Team Managers to seek assistance as necessary.

## 7. Step Down

- When risks and needs have deescalated and it is felt that the child/young persons needs require a service from FIS, CWD ESS or PExT (taking into account other services who could support the family) the request for step down from the SW service should be discussed at TAM.
- It is good practice for the SW to discuss a potential step down with the appropriate receiving service Team Leader prior to concluding the assessment to manage family's expectations and ensure the right service at the right time, if unable to discuss at TAM within timeframes.
- There should be no emergency or quick access to step-down as this needs to be a planned move with a well-designed family plan and full informed consent in place.
- A three-way (family, social worker and new worker) introduction and / or a step-down planning meeting with all relevant partners is to take place before formal transfer of the family or young person. This should include recommendations of the intervention requested.
- Step-Down or transfer form (which is in effect minutes of the step-down/child in need/team around the family meeting) will be completed by the social worker after the step-down meeting.
- For PExT, FIS this will be sent with the step-down task from LCS to EHM to step-down tray on EHM.

### **For allocation to CWD ESS on LCS:**

- If the transferring service work on LCS, they need to complete all active tasks first.
- Create a new contact on LCS and tick start CWD early support episode
- Reassign to CWD early support.
- For the FIS, PExT, LC or CwD ESS the step-down or closure process on LCS /EHM to be followed.

## 8. Neglect

It is recognised that identifying and working with neglect is an area of prime importance and one where a degree of 'normalisation' can lead to a lack of clarity. For this reason, where a Family Intervention Worker is concerned about neglect, a joint home visit with their Team Leader will take place before the family is taken to TAM for discussion. [The Family Strengths & Needs Toolkit](#) must also be completed. This will ensure managerial oversight and aid the manager-to-manager TAM discussions about whether a family should be stepped up to children's social care. Where a family is not accepted for Step Up where neglect is a concern, the Team

Leader may escalate this for review and potential further action to their Operations Manager.

## 9. Resolving Professional Difference

- If a step up is not agreed within TAM, and the Team Leader of the relevant service remains concerned that the level of need has not been agreed, then the escalation process is to request a step in from the area Assessment Team.
- If there is a disagreement between the teams that is not resolved by a step-in visit, the relevant Operations Managers will hold a review and come to a final decision and record a management oversight note on both EHM and LCS.
- If a professional outside Children's Social Care disagrees with a decision made to step up (or not) a family, they can be sent a copy of the rationale recorded on the finalised step-up form from TAM.
- If a professional retains concerns about the decision made, they should alert their line manager and follow the Resolving Professional Differences protocol.
- It is expected that the team who are allocated the work with the child and family clearly communicate with partners and ensure their views on the step-up /down are represented in TAM.
- TAM is not open to non-CSC partners or family members.