

Safeguarding Early Adopters programme

Learning example

Early Adopter: Salford

Learning Theme: Practice Reviews – Policy, toolkit and case discussion tool

Background, aims and objectives

A key theme of the Salford Early Adopter Bid was to improve the way case reviews were undertaken and how learning and impact is understood. This includes cases under the threshold of local practice reviews, but where multiagency learning is evident.

There has been a considerable amount of work undertaken within Salford to achieve the products that are now in their final draft form ready for implementation.

Approach

An independent evaluation of the current methods of undertaking rapid reviews and other case reviews was undertaken as a baseline to understand what worked well, and what could be improved. Timeliness of reviews and keeping the child at the centre were two key areas for improvement, but the quality of reviews was overall found to be good.

The case review sub-group (now the practice review sub-group under the new arrangements) has acted as a steering group for the work to develop new ways of working, with a smaller multi-agency task and finish group to look at the evidence, proposed changes, and processes. Having partners who are involved in other local areas, such as Police, involved in this work has been invaluable.

It was decided early on that a single process for all reviews, including rapid reviews, was desirable. This has been achieved, and we have a new practice review policy, which combines the processes for rapid reviews and all other reviews into one process. This simplifies the types of reviews that are undertaken and brings greater rigour into timeliness and learning from reviews.

We have revised the practice review referral form to include pre-referral actions and guidance for the referrers to ensure they are clear thresholds are met, the child/family has been consulted and prepared for the review if appropriate, and to provide more analytical information including a section 'about the child' which provides a pen picture about their lives rather than agency activity.

We also wanted to learn from good practice, and a 'good outcome review' is being introduced, the criteria, guidance and referral form for which has been agreed and we are awaiting our first one to test this out.

In order to improve analysis in reviews, a new methodology has been developed for case discussions (the case discussion tool – funkier names considered and rejected in favour of calling it what it is). This tool is evidence-inspired, based on robust methods such as Kolb's Learning cycle, Signs of Safety and the Problem Tree. It provides a simple structure for discussions and the report based on the agency information collected about the case in a cost-effective and time-effective manner. Professionals from all agencies have now been trained in its use, and they are reporting greater applications outside of case reviews in their own agencies. We will evaluate its effectiveness when we evaluate our new arrangements in November/December. The current version of tool itself is attached at the bottom of this learning example.

The learning from reviews forms part of the Safeguarding Effectiveness Framework, and the practice review sub group will spend less time chasing actions on action plans and more on discussing themes from reviews to add to the evidence base of 'what is going on in Salford, and how are we doing'.

Challenges

- It has been important to recognise that the process for rapid reviews worked well in Salford, and to maintain what works well whilst making necessary changes.
- The greatest challenge will be in embedding the new process and referral forms, and expectations on the referrers to provide more information.

Successes

- Consistently good engagement, discussion and agreement across the partnership in both the task and finish group and the practice review sub group.
- Having an independent evaluation to draw out strengths as well as opportunities.

Conclusion

Whilst the policy and toolkit are starting to be implemented this month, the conclusion is not in sign off of the documents but in successful implementation. We consider the new ways of working and introduction of a case discussion tool and good outcomes review the first step only, and we are looking forward to testing these out to determine what we can do better for individual children, and for the system as a whole as a result of learning from reviews of practice.

Documents and links



Salford Case
discussion tool v6.doc



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Following



Great @salfordscp multi-agency safeguarding training session today on our new case discussion tool

#safeinsalford #makingadifference
@EyFord1 @carolebrookasuk

