Family Solutions Practice Framework

Aim of the Practice Framework

The aim of the Practice Framework is to provide:

- A basis of expected standards of practice
- To ensure consistency of practice across Family Solutions

These standards will apply to both part time and full time staff. If you have concerns regarding the standards or your ability to implement them, then please discuss these with your Supervisor to identify whether this can be resolved through supervision or training.

Throughout this framework you will see the majority of timescales are set at calendar days or calendar weeks. For clarity; a calendar week is seven consecutive days, calendar days includes weekends and Bank Holidays and working days are days are classed as Monday to Friday.

1. Initial Contact/Requests for Support

1.1 From the point of receiving a contact in the Family Centre group mailbox, the maximum timescale for a case to be presented to a Multi Agency Action Meeting is 15 calendar days.

1.2 An acknowledgement email must be sent from the Family Centre group mailbox (from business support) to the Professional who has referred the case in the first instance *(For MASH contacts this will not be the Early Help Desk but the referrer who submitted the case into MASH)* within a maximum of 3 calendar days of receipt, however there is an expectation this task will be completed within 1 working day. (*This will include all contacts except DART's)*. The email must confirm receipt of the request at the centre and provide timescales as to when the referrer will be notified of the outcome following screening.

1.3 A Contact Record within EIS must be completed for requests for support received at the Family Centre, including:

- Early Help Assessments
- Early Help Family Plans
- MARF's
- DART's
- All other MASH contacts
- Walk-in enquiries to the Family Centre that require further action
- Foodbank vouchers

1.4 Business support staff to monitor the Family Centre group mailbox on an hourly basis and upload contacts onto EIS. All contacts received from the previous day must be uploaded onto EIS before 10:00 each morning to ensure all information is available for the daily Screening meeting.

2. Screening

2.1 The daily responsibility for screening is owned by the Family Centres Manager and is staffed between the Family Centre Manager, Senior Practice Supervisor and Early Help Social worker. Screening must be held on a daily basis to review requests for support and determine outcomes.

2.2 The Professional who has submit the initial request for support must receive confirmation of the outcome of the screening within a maximum of 3 calendar days of screening taking place, however there is an expectation this task will be completed within 1 working day. (*Apart from DART Contacts). If the case goes to MAAM then than an email must be sent to the original referrer from business support.*

2.3 Where a case is stepped down to Early Help the expectation is that allocation to a worker will take place within 24 hours of being screened.

3. Multi Agency Action Meeting

3.1 The Professional who has submit the initial request must receive confirmation of the outcome of the Multi Agency Action Meeting within a maximum of 3 calendar days of receipt , (business support to make contact) however there is an expectation this task will be completed within 1 working day.

3.2 If the outcome of the Multi Agency Action Meeting is to allocate a case to a Family Solutions Practitioner, cases must be allocated within 5 calendar days with an expectation of this taking place within 2 working days of the Multi Agency Action Meeting taking place.

3.3 At a minimum Duty workers must make weekly contact with each family on the Pre-Allocation List and record on a case note within EIS.

4. Early Help Assessments

4.1 A Family Centre staff member must make initial contact with the family within 2 calendar days of the case being allocated to them. The first visit to the family must be completed within 5 working days of making that initial contact. This must include the child being seen and spoken to.

4.2 Practitioners should be mindful of the lone working policy when scheduling visits to families at the end of the day where there is the potential for contentious or high risk situations or where management/colleague support might be needed. **Revised Out of Hours process will be linked to this*

4.3 The Early Help Assessment must be completed and created on EIS, and the Family Plan commenced and created on EIS within 4 calendar weeks from the date of allocation to the Lead Practitioner.

4.4 Early Help Assessment audits will be completed by the Early Help Enablers for all EHA's entered onto the system. The focus of the audit will be: - **Completed within timescale/ family history & details of previous interventions/childs developmental needs have been identified/recording is clear and succinct/partner agencies involvement is evident/voice of the child/clear recommendation of next steps.**

4.5 An Early Help Assessment is not required for those cases stepped down to Early Help from Social Care, where a CYPA has been completed within three calendar months. It is expected that an EHA will be completed where there is a CYPA that is over 3 months old.

4.6 An Early Help Assessment should be for cases stepped down to Early Help from Child Protection or Chid Protection Enquiry.

5. Early Help Family Plan

5.1 Practitioners must ensure an Early Help Family Plan form is added to EIS for each Plan started and ensure the following panels/fields are completed; Form Added By, Early Help Family Plan Dates, What is the reason for this Early Help Family Plan and Voice of the Child/Young Person/Parent/Carer/Lead Practitioner. The Individual Score and Overall Score Panels should be completed where applicable. Practitioners must complete the remainder of the Plan using the paper version and ensure the completed Plan and outcome scoring wheel is uploaded to EIS.

5.2 The Early Help Family Plan must be completed within 42 calendar days (6 weeks) of allocation to the Lead Practitioner. Where there is a CYPA that it less than 3 months old an Early Help Family Plan must be completed. Subsequent review meetings must take place at least every 42 calendar days (6 weeks) thereafter. All plans should be **SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant & Time bound).**

5.3 Management oversight must be recorded on EIS at each plan and review-see 11.1. The plan should set out:- **The outcomes to be achieved, what needs to be done to achieve them, how progress will be evaluated, who will be responsible for what,**

what the timeframes are for change, what will happen if the plan isn't working, outcome scoring to identify progress achieved.

5.4 An Early Help Family Plan must be completed for cases stepped down where there is an existing Child in Need or Child Protection Plan. This will ensure that the finer detail of the early help intervention is captured and planned for.

6. <u>Cases Stepped down from Social Care</u>

6.1 Cases stepped down to Early Help from Social Care should be allocated to a worker within 48 hours of the case being received from Social Care.

7. <u>Cases Escalated to Social Care & Requests for Wrap Around Support</u>

7.1 All requests for wraparound support should be screened and allocated within 5 calendar days of the request being received from Social Care, with an expectation of this taking place within 2 working days.

7.2 Decisions to escalate a case to Social Care must be recorded in a Case Note on EIS along with a copy of the MARF.

7.3 Practitioners must make initial contact with the allocated Social worker within 2 working days of Social Care confirming the case meets Level 4 threshold. The Practitioner must forward; a copy of the Early Help Assessment, overview of the case and request whether wrap around support is required.

7.4 If the case is waiting to be allocated to a Social worker then the Practitioner must contact the relevant Social Care Team Manager to confirm whether wrap around support is required.

7.5 If no response is received from either the allocated Social worker or Team Manager within 5 working days of the initial contact being made, the Practitioner must escalate the case to their Manager.

7.6 The Manager must make contact with the relevant Social Care Team Manager as soon as possible to confirm whether wrap around support is required. If no response is received within 3 working days of the contact being made, then the Manager must escalate the case to the Service Manager.

7.7 Once Social Care have confirmed whether wrap around support is required, the decision should be recorded on the 'Stepped up to Social Care form' in EIS.

7.8 If wrap around support is required, the Manager must deallocate the Practitioner from the 'Key' worker role in EIS and reallocate the case as 'Wraparound'.

7.9 For wrap around cases Practitioners must record a case note on CCM with details of the allocated Early Help Practitioner and any subsequent significant events for example; home visits, a telephone call that includes important information the Social worker needs to know, contact with a partner agency that contains relevant information relating to the case.

7.10 A case must not be closed until confirmation is received from Social Care that no further support is required from Early Help.

7.11 The Early Help Practitioner must keep any partner agencies involved informed regarding the progress of the case, until a clear directive is received from Social Care in relation to the next steps.

8. Transfer of Cases between Family Centres

8.1 For families who move address (changing their allocated Family Centre) whilst open to Family Support in Dudley, a supported transition between Family Centres will take place.

8.2 The Allocated worker will;

- Ensure the Early Help Assessment/Early Help Family Plan is up to date at the point of transfer.
- Speak with the family to discuss case transfer.
- Email new Family Centre group inbox to inform them of the reallocation and await confirmation this has been screened and allocated.
- A review of the case will take place between workers and managers to agree outstanding responsibilities.
- Good practice will be to undertake a handover meeting with family and new allocated worker. Where this is not possible, a minimum of a telephone call to the family to support handover must take place.
- Where immediate allocation to a new worker is not possible, handover via email to the appropriate Senior Practitioner/Family Centre Manager will take place.

Work will not be deallocated to the existing worker until the handover process has taken place.

9. Case Closure Process

9.1 Workers must obtain approval for case closure through case discussion with their Manager prior to the submission of a Case Closure form. Once case closure has been agreed, Managers must record the decision on a Managers Decision case note on EIS.

9.2 All Managers must sign off cases by completing the case closure process within 3 calendar days of receipt of a case closure request. This includes recording an end date for involvement and deallocating the case in the managers desktop.

9.3 Prior to case closure it is up to the member of staff to ensure the case is closure ready. This includes: - **Ensuring all records are up to date on EIS, relevant documents are uploaded, outstanding actions from the plan are completed, any further tasks as directed by the Supervisor and a case closure summary is provided.**

10. <u>Voice of the child</u>

10.1 As a minimum standard Voice of the child/direct work must be evident during the assessment, plan, case work and case closure.

10.2 Practitioners must record direct work and voice of child within case note entitled 'Direct work/Voice of the child' in EIS.

11. <u>Case Recording</u>

11.1 All case recording must be completed on the system by the end of the next working day.

11.2 As a minimum standard all visits should highlight: - **Purpose, who was there, details of visit, actions, analysis of visit and views of the child/young person.**

12. <u>Management Oversight</u>

12.1 Management oversight must be recorded on EIS as a 'Managers Decision' case note for each assessment, family plan, review and closure within 3 calendar days. There should be evidence of management oversight on all case records as a minimum of once per month.

12.2 Case discussions and actions must be recorded on the system as a 'Managers Decision' case note by the Supervisor by the end of the next working day from the discussion with the staff member taking place.

12.3 The recommended caseload for a full time practitioner is 20 families. For a part time member of staff the caseload will be 10 families *(* There is some flexibility within this figure for those larger families and intensive working, but this will be based on a case loading discussion with your supervisor)*

12.4 Supervisors should prioritise oversight for those cases open over 3, 6, 9 and 12 months via reporting.

12.5 Leads should be aware of the most intensive/high risk cases that their team are holding. This is to ensure high level oversight for our most vulnerable children and young people.

12.6 Supervision should take place every 4 calendar weeks and recorded within the Supervision Case Note on EIS immediately.

12.7 Management oversight will also be provided to Early Help Enablers for cases they are supporting and should be record as ‘Managers Decision’ case note.

12.8 Where a case has been open for 6 months or more, a case consultation with the Early Help Social worker must be booked to review the case.

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