

QUALITY COMMITTEE MEETING

Friday 23 November, 2012
Sanctuary Buildings

- Present** Mary MacLeod, Chair of Quality Committee & Cafcass Board Member
Terence Connor, Vice Chair of Quality Committee & Cafcass Board Member
Ian Butler, Cafcass Board Member
Honor Rhodes, Cafcass Board Member
Fay Selvan, Cafcass Board Member
June Thoburn, Advisor to the Quality Committee
- In attendance** Anthony Douglas, Chief Executive
Christine Banim, National Service Director
Richard Green, Child Protection Manager (for item 5)
Hilary Barrett, Head of Service (A5) (for item 4)
Mary Berwick-Sayers, Executive Assistant (Minutes)

Apologies

MINUTES

1. Welcome & Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies to note.

2. Minutes of Meeting on 6 September, 2012 and Matters Arising

The minutes of 6 September 2012 were agreed as an accurate record.

Honor Rhodes informed the Committee that she and the Child Protection Manager had begun a dialogue about clinical tools to assist in the review of our practice model to assess young people at risk of suicide.

3. Ofsted Report (A5)

The Head of Service for A5 took the Committee through the main findings of the Ofsted Report for A5 and the work that is being undertaken to address issues raised in the report, particularly those around children not being seen in a case and the service being too adult focused. The Committee congratulated the Head of Service on Improving the service from the low base when she took over.

4. Health Check Methodology/Update on Practice Audits

The National Service Director explained the background to and the purpose of the Health Check Framework, explaining that it had been put in place to drive up internal improvement and to work together with the Ofsted methodology. She went on to explain that it is continually updated with the learning from each Ofsted inspection and any learning from complaints, SCRs and health checks and sets out the improvements that need to be made as a result. It was noted that the Health Check Framework will be revised again to incorporate within it a peer review element, including the process of seeking the views of external agencies, in particular, from Local Authorities. The National Service Director also explained that the role of the National Improvement Service (NIS) which runs alongside this process is to identify and subsequently support the individual

and team learning needed as a result of health checks. She went on to explain the work being done by Heads of Service to raise the percentage of work rated as “good” from 24% (based on information from internal health checks) to over 50% by August 2013.

The National Service Director took the Committee through the four QA tools that have been drafted as a result of this process and agreed to share final versions of these with Committee members. Whilst Committee members were impressed by this work and the general consensus was that the quality of work is being driven up within the organisation, concern was raised that the word “safe” and other jargon has been used in a range of ways, thus reducing its meaningfulness. The National Service Director agreed to give consideration to this.

5. Child Protection Reports

The Child Protection Manager was welcomed to the meeting. He presented the Quarterly Rolling Report on Serious Case Reviews, from January to October 2012, and the Individual Management Reviews paper. He explained that these documents are produced for the Committee to give members an overview of cases and statistics and to share the learning and actions taken, locally and nationally, arising from Cafcass submissions to Serious Case Reviews. The Committee briefly reviewed the two Individual Management Reviews submitted by Cafcass in the period September 2012 to November 2012, one in respect of private law proceedings and the other in respect of public law proceedings. As a result of the first case, it was noted that the Cafcass section 16A (Children Act 1989) duty will be reinforced with Early Intervention Team (EIT) managers at a Development Day in December.

6. A possible Key Performance Indicator (KPI) on Quality: Work in Progress

The Chief Executive introduced this paper, stating that it was very much a ‘work in progress’. He went on to say that as the issue of introducing a Key Performance Measure for quality for the whole family justice system is being led by the Department, it is not necessary for Cafcass to move too quickly to identify an individual KPI, not least as we already have some good measures of quality in place that offer assurance to the Board about the quality of our work.

The following was agreed:

- The Chief Executive agreed to further explore the issue of whether a child might not be seen by their children’s guardian in a care case.
- our work must always be child focused
- a child focused thread will be woven throughout the health check methodology framework. This will ensure that we have a measure in place throughout this programme which also ensures due emphasis is placed on demonstrating the quality of our service to children in the work.
- a sample of intermediate outcomes will be worked on (i.e. at the end of court proceedings) and some outcome statements sought (perhaps initially produced through piloting this in one team).
- An annual report from the Quality Committee will be written which will be shared internally and externally and at our Open meetings which will include complaints, feedback from our service users, our own evaluation, Ofsted reports and any other measures we want to employ from our research studies.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Quality Committee will look at potential small scale research studies and literature reviews that we can undertake to support this work.

7. **Committee Lead Responsibilities**

The Committee formally received and noted the Committee Lead Responsibilities paper.

8. **Performance Initiatives**

The Committee formally received and noted the Performance Initiatives paper.

9. **Date of Next Meeting**

24 January 2013, 2.00pm – 4.00pm, Sanctuary Buildings

Action Summary

1. The National Service Director agreed to share the final versions of the 4 QA tools and to review the use of the word “safe” in each of these documents.
2. The Chief Executive agreed to further explore the issue of whether a child might not be seen by their children’s guardian in a care case.
3. The National Service Director agreed to weave a child focused thread throughout the health check methodology
4. A sample of intermediate outcomes (i.e. at the end of court proceedings) will be worked on and some outcome statements sought (perhaps initially produced through piloting this in one team).
5. An Annual Report from the Quality Committee will be written to be shared internally and externally and at Board Open Meetings which will include complaints, feedback from service users, our own evaluation, Ofsted reports and any other measures we want to employ from our research studies.
6. The Quality Committee will consider undertaking small scale research studies and literature reviews to support the work towards identifying a possible KPI on Quality.