Multi Agency Chronologies

**Background**

**Lucy SCR (june 2016)**

Lucy and her unborn baby died as a result of a violent teenage relationship, at the hands of her ex boyfriend. Previously to this, Lucy’s baby was subject of a CP Plan, but Lucy was seen as a Child in Need. Findings and actions arose from SCR by Deborah Jeremiah and a concurrent Domestic Homicide Review.

**What was the poor practice and impact:** A finding was that in Gloucestershire there is a lack of established practice and process to support a full multi‐agency understanding of the child’s experience and this inhibits a comprehensive assessment of risk. In this case information was not joined up until after Lucy’s death and it was apparent that there was a large body of information that was held by single agencies and family members but not shared at the time. Without the benefit of all known information being shared across agency, the risk assessment and safety planning around Lucy was compromised and ineffectual.

**Why multi agency chronology**

What was confirmed by the frontline professionals in the case group, was that *not one* professional, or one agency, had all the information about what was happening in Lucy’s life.

* A number of agencies were giving social care significant information about what was

happening in Lucy’s life, but was not effectively considered and therefore did not inform the risk assessment..

* The police dealt with each contact in isolation and there was no overview
* This was replicated across health agencies
* A number of times mental health professionals did not pass information to the SW and key information was not included in the Strategy Discussion
* information that Lucy had given the police about what her ex partner had done to her was lost along the way and ‘changed’ by the time of a Strat
* Key information provided by Lucy’s mother about the ex boyfriends violent and controlling behaviour was never shared by the police with social care, at the time or at the Strat or at the Initial CP Conference

Prevalence: at time of writing Lucy SCR, Gloucestershire had undertaken four case reviews in the last four years. In all of them it was an issue that not all the frontline professionals had all the information.

The SCR picked up that *despite it being an action from a previous review in 2012* that multi‐agency chronologies should be used when a child is made the subject of a child protection plan, this is not happening routinely. One of the reasons for this is because professionals do not always feel clear what is relevant, without necessarily knowing the context – but that is the point, each piece of information may be ‘a worry’ but we only know *how significant* the information is when all the worries are put together.

Actions included (details and timescales in the LUCY SCR RESPONSE PLAN in relation to one of 6 findings):

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| * *Request an analysis of how often multi-agency chronologies are produced before an Initial Child Protection Conference takes place* * *Continue work to produce a GSCB multi-agency chronology guidance document, to include reference to the child’s voice* * *Review the MARF to consider whether a chronology prompt could be added to the form.* * *Request that a piece of work is undertaken through the South West Child Protection Procedures to produce shared guidance in relation to the use of multi-agency chronologies* |
| **On the GSCB website is the single and multi agency chronology guidance, dated 7th Nov 2016.**  It includes:  **When to complete a Multi Agency Chronology?**  Lessons from Serious Case Reviews have taught us that if all the pieces of information held by separate professionals about a child’s life were shared appropriately, and in a timely manner, the outcome for the child concerned may have been very different.  It is for this reason that a multi agency chronology should be started as soon as there is multi-agency involvement i.e. My Plan/My Assessment/My Plan+, EHCP, TAC, Strategy Discussion, Child in Need, CP etc. The Lead Practitioner should hold the chronology. The Lead Practitioner should be identified as soon as there is more than one agency working with the child and their family and there should be clear agreement of how and when the Lead Practitioner role will be handed over when an agency ceases their involvement.  The Multi-agency Chronology should commence verbally as soon as there is multi-agency involvement. Some families have very long and complicated histories – the compiling of a chronology will be a more onerous task and cannot be completed within a short period of time. It is essential that as much work as is practicable is completed in the early stages and continued commitment and time be given to the completion of a full chronology through the course of working with a child and their family.  In cases where there are child protection concerns, all attempts should be made to create a multi-agency chronology as part of the information shared at the Initial Child Protection Conference.  At the Initial Child Protection Conference, when a child or young person is made the subject of a child protection plan, the continued requirement of a Multi-agency Child Protection Chronology will form part of the child protection plan – the chair of the conference will task the Core Group with adding detail to the outline plan and to develop and keep up to date a multi-agency chronology. Depending on the case, the Core Group will decide on the most appropriate professional to have oversight that the chronology is kept up to date and reviewed at each Core Group meeting. |