

Implementation Plan

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Bulletin – July 2014

Training through LL at Team Meetings – July14



CHRONOLOGY GUIDANCE

1. Chronologies and Significant Events

1.1 The chronology summarises the significant events in a client's life. A well recorded chronology can be used as an analytical tool to help inform decision making, by helping to understand the impact on the child of their life events.

1.2 When should I start a chronology?

A chronology must be started for every case at the point of referral. First Response Teams should always initiate the chronology prior to case transfer and prior to the first CIN review or Initial Child Protection Conference. This makes it easy to maintain and useful in the future, e.g. if the case comes to Court or needs re-assessment.

1.3 A chronology should be started at the point of referral for each child in the family. For cases that are re-referred, a chronology should be started from the point of referral as this will document the pattern of referrals and reason that a child is subject to a second or subsequent referral. An up to date version of the chronology should be saved.

1.4 If there is no previous chronology, the new allocated social worker will write a case summary (of no more than one page) giving an overview of the previous case history/concern/outcomes.

1.5 What is a chronology?

A chronology is a series of "headlines" which record, in date order, the significant events and changes in a child or young person's life. It gives an immediate, visual overview of significant events that can impact upon the assessment of the child's needs. **It is not just a series of agency actions.**

Each entry into a chronology should include, the data, a summary of the significant event, together with the outcome of the significant event. For example:

2.6.14 Georgina appeared at school with severe bruising to her arms and she made a disclosure to her teacher that, "daddy hits her with a brush". Management decision made to initiate s.47 enquiries.

And:

2.6.14 Strategy meeting held, agreed to hold an ABE interview with Georgina, to undertake a medical examination and to make enquiries with the family as to alternative carers within the family, whilst s.47 enquiries progress.

Entries to the chronology therefore should be

- Specific, including dates / times where appropriate and the source of the information
- Contain factual information or be clearly specified as unsubstantiated
 - One line only, e.g. “Jo moved to Southfields School”
 - Neutral reporting, e.g. “Alleged assault on mother by father”.
 - Give the source, e.g. information in letter from Health Visitor
 - Include all relevant headlines even if they seem contradictory
 - Include headline information received from other agencies

Significant events which must be recorded in a chronology include:

- Significant changes of circumstances: changes of carer, address, legal status, school, family circumstances and household composition
- Incidents and allegations of abuse, educational issues including out of school episodes, incidents of absconding, going missing or running away, incidents re bullying, gender or culture, offending or police involvement
- Family issues: changes in family composition, domestic violence, financial or housing problems, physical or mental health, substance misuse, homelessness, imprisonment or victimisation
- Professional involvement: Referrals with source, assessments, significant decisions, interventions, S47 enquiries, CIN / CP episodes, court hearings, Children’s Centre involvement, FGCs, involvement of specialist services e.g. CAMHS.

1.6 Why do a chronology?

It is a quick, effective way to see what is happening in the life of a child or young person. It helps identify patterns and issues – invaluable in assessing risk and when analysing the likely impact of events. It is particularly useful in cases where there may be no single “incident” – e.g. in neglect. It is therefore an essential tool in analysis and planning at all stages and especially when cases are transferred. Equally important it may later help a young person make sense of their own life.

1.7 How often should the chronology be updated?

It is important to maintain the chronology as the case progresses to prevent it from becoming an unmanageable task. **The chronology should be updated at a minimum of monthly** and should be completely up to date for all CIN, LAC and CP reviews and at the point of case closure. An out of date chronology cannot provide full information for further analysis and planning nor for the child later in life.

1.8 It is the responsibility of the allocated social worker to keep the chronology up to date. Each new significant event must be recorded on the chronology as soon as possible. This will ensure that all available information is available should it be required (such as in the event of Emergency Duty team becoming involved out of office hours). Chronologies should be brought to case supervision sessions where supervisors will check the quality of the information included and discuss on-going work on the case.

1.9 When the case is ready to be closed or to be transferred, the chronology must be available for the closure or transfer meeting. Delays in updating the chronology result in cases remaining open unnecessarily

1.10 How do I record a chronology?

The chronology should contain significant events/headlines which reflect the date and what happened, the impact on the child what work / intervention took place, who was responsible and what the outcome was. It should be an 'at a glance' view of the case.

In LiquidLogic, the chronology must be completed as follows:

1. Click onto 'chronology'
2. Click on 'Add new chronology'
3. Enter the event date
4. Under 'Category', enter Child Protection/Child in Need or Looked After, according to what category of episode the event occurred in.
5. Under 'Type', enter the nature of the event, e.g. Strategy Meeting, or S.47 enquiry.
6. Under 'Event Details' enter the details of the significant event, in no more than a few lines.

Next there are two alternative ways of exhibiting the chronology:

1. Go to 'print chronology' and this will exhibit the chronology as shown in Appendix One. This can also be saved as PDF, or merely retained on Liquid Logic.
2. For Court chronologies, click on 'export chronology', click, 'create', fill in the sections with the Court details, click 'download document' and the chronology will appear in a Court format. See Appendix Two for an example of this.

Please Note – Do not transfer events from the 'History' in Liquid Logic to the chronology as this does not contain sufficient information for the chronology.