

## **The Management of Tele Conferencing in Derby Child Protection Conferences**

### **Background**

Child Protection Conferences are important meetings convened and chaired by the local authority for children where there are concerns relating to their care or treatment. The Conference is attended by key professionals, the parent / carer of the child and where appropriate, the child.

To formulate a clear picture of the child's life and circumstance it is crucial that all relevant safeguarding information is shared and a plan of next steps is put in place to ensure that the child's identified needs are responded to at the right level and by the right service.

Historically there have been challenges associated with General Practitioners (GPs) attending Case Conferences, primarily due to their own work commitments and responsibilities. However, it is accepted that the information that GPs hold maybe critical to the plans that are put in place for the child.

Southern Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group (SDCCG) and Derby City Council have explored with GPs how best their views can be included in the Conference by using a more flexible approach. Tele conferencing has been introduced in a bid to expand the range of options possible and to broaden participation.

It must be made explicitly clear that this process does not excuse the GP from attending case conferences or providing written reports. Tele conferencing should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

More recently the Derby Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) has also been alerted to the fact that there have been occasions when Paediatricians have been unable to attend Child Protection Conferences. It has been agreed that in exceptional circumstances this procedure will also be used by these professionals to impart relevant information on a child to a Child Protection Conference.

**All references to GPs in this guidance, also applies to Paediatricians**

### **What is a conference call?**

A conference call is simply a phone call with more than two participants. It is enabled by use of a telephone which has technical features which can facilitate the call.

It is conducted like a normal conversation or meeting, except that the speakers cannot see one another.

### **Role of the Child Protection Managers (CPM)**

CPMs chair Child Protection Conferences and a range of other meetings. It will be the CPM who will facilitate the conference call during the Child Protection meeting.

## **Practical Guidance for Child Protection Conference Chairs in the use of Tele Conference Facilities**

### **Planning**

#### **Admin Process**

1. Child Protection administration staff will invite the allocated GP to all Child Protection Conferences following the current procedure. If the GP is unable to attend but is able to share information using the tele conferencing facility they will inform admin by email the time when they can ring into the Conference.
2. Admin will record the GP will ring into the Conference and alert the CPM of this.
3. Admin will provide the GP with a phone number to ring and put the call through to the Chair of the Conference at the appointed time.

#### **Child Protection Manager (CPM) Role**

1. The CPM will prepare for the meeting in the normal way by reading all background information on the family provided by all agencies and any additional electronic information held on Children's Social Care client records.
2. The CPM will contact the allocated Social Worker in the usual manner and discuss the case including the fact that the GP will be ringing into the Conference to share safeguarding information relevant to the children and family.
3. The CPM will contact the GP prior to the Conference by email / phone and discuss the case, including any practical / contentious issues which the CPM is aware of in relation to the family circumstances, and confirm the time the GP will ring in to the Conference.
4. The CPM will include information about the GP ringing in to the Conference with parents / carers / children during their preliminary discussions with them prior to the Conference.
5. The CPM is expected to log into the conference phone at the start of the Conference (although calls will be diverted to admin and the GP ringing in to the Conference will be put through by CP admin at the agreed time).

#### **GP Role**

1. The GP will agree a suitable time with the allocated CPM to ring into the Conference. It is essential that any delay in doing this is notified via the GP practice to the Child Protection admin officer.
2. The GP is expected to ring in from a confidential environment where there are no other professionals able to listen in to the call.
3. The GP must be aware that information shared will be to all Conference attendees, including parents and children. The GP will be expected to answer questions on their report to Conference on the child.

- Unless the GP attends the Conference in person, they will not be able to hear all shared information from partner agencies, as a result of this they will be not be asked their opinion regarding whether the child / children should be made subject to a Child Protection Plan.

### **The Calling Process**

At the start of the meeting it is important that all participants know that there will be an interruption in the meeting at a particular time in order for the GP to share their information.

### **Calling Process**

- At the beginning of the call the CPM should ensure that the GP is phoning from a confidential environment and they know that what he/she is saying will be heard by all in the meeting, including the parent, carer and child.
- CPM reiterates the status of the Child Protection Conference, the reason why the meeting is being held and the confidentiality clause.
- All participants should introduce themselves to the caller, including their name and role.
- CPM will summarise at what point they are at in relation to the Conference and request the caller share the information which they have in relation to the child.
- CPM will ask all participants if they have any questions which they need to ask the caller and will remind participants to re-state their name when asking questions.

**It is important that the CPM keeps side conversations to a minimum. It is expected that where there is an assessed need for an interpreter for the Child Protection Conference the process for this will not change and information shared by the GP will be interpreted accordingly.**

**At the end of the call the CPM should thank the caller for their contribution and let them know how and when they will get the minutes of the meeting.**

### **Version Control**

<b>Policy to be read in conjunction with the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Procedures</b>					
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