

## High Needs Panel

### Terms of Reference

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#### 1. Purpose

This High Needs Panel makes decisions on cross agency issues and collaborative funding packages are agreed based upon the specific complex needs of young people. Effective clinical and professional governance arrangements will be in place within each organisation to ensure the health, educational and social care needs are met.

#### 2. Principles

- Ensuring services provided are meeting the needs of the child or young person, wherever possible within their local community and via universal services
- Ensuring that the needs of the child or young person could not be met in a more cost-effective manner
- Ensuring that the outcomes for the placement are clearly identified and monitored
- Ensuring procured services are provided as detailed in the contract
- Having a defined and finite timescale for the required funding
- Ensuring a review date is set for the funding agreement
- Ensuring that the commissioning process is informed and modified by an ongoing evaluation of the use of resources
- Reviewing the level and trend of internal resources

- Commissioning of specific pieces of work, reviews or analysis as determined by the panel;
- Taking a planned approach to identifying appropriate resources based on a thorough joint assessment
- Considering circumstances of children presented by any of the three agencies with the expectation that prior consultation, assessment and planning have taken place between colleagues from other agencies at a local level
- Ensuring the views of the child, young person and their family are fully considered and used to inform decision making
- Owning and managing quality and risk required all the multi-agency partners to take a corporate approach and each agency should be clear of its own lines of accountability
- Staffing and financial resources will be used effectively, efficiently and equitably
- The principles of the interagency working in meeting the high complex needs of children who require specialist provision are underpinned in the guidance documents below:
  - The National Framework for Children and Young People’s Continuing Care
  - Establishing the Responsible Commissioner Guidance
  - Out of Area placements for Children
  - Children and Families Act 2014
  - Care Act
  - Working Together 2018
  - Children Act 1989

### 3. The Scope of the High Needs Panel

- The aim of the Panel is to ensure that children who have complex needs which cannot be met within local education, health and/or social care services are placed in specialist environments or receive high level support packages and that each aspect of the child’s care, health and educational needs are appropriately funded and reviewed
- The Panel does not replace the statutory care-planning process. Its role is to ensure that each placement meets the identified and assessed needs of the child or young person as set out in their care plan within an agreed level of resources
- To ensure there is a multi-agency assessment of need to inform the multi-agency in the short- and long-term care plans
- To ensure that anticipated outcomes of the placement/support are agreed with timescales for review stipulated. All initial agreements will be reviewed within 6 months unless another timescale is identified at panel
- To enable multi-agency challenge to recommendations, options analysis and costs of proposals to encourage and enable creative and flexible solutions to jointly meet the needs of this group of children and young people
- Promote effective decision-making from all partners and the avoidance of delay children will only be placed in external resource when their needs cannot be appropriately met by local resources.
- All children should have access to some form of family life, either with their parents or extended family. It is expected a Family Group Conference has been considered where it is appropriate before any consideration is given to a placement outside the child's family.
- To make decisions about children and young people who may require internal or external placements to meet education, care and/or health needs, or a combination of these needs. This

includes, children's homes with and without education, foster care (respite, short and long term), parent and baby placements, supported lodgings and all other settings

- To make decision on high cost non-placement support packages to support internal and external placements in meeting the educational, care and/or health needs of children
- To reach agreement on joint funding for complex care packages; advise the Children's Joint Commissioning Board on any issues arising from the High Needs Panel
- To ensure that the holistic needs of children and young people are fully considered when making decisions about appropriate placement provision
- To agree budget arrangements, placement costs, timescales and review dates. This includes giving due consideration to contributions from Social Care, CCG and Education
- To forecast expenditure on placements and ensure seamless funding agreement processes short medium- and long-term need
- To monitor and review resources for children and young people to enhance the ability of local services to meet the needs of children and young people with complex needs in terms of facilitating multi-agency resources either to maintain a placement or to provide alternative services that prevent the need for placement
- To confirm the 'lead profession' with responsibility to coordinate the delivery of the child's multi-agency plan within the provision identified
- To ensure that the respective financial responsibilities of health, education and social care services are agreed based on assessment of needs
- To agree lead agency responsibility for the contractual arrangements that is put into place with service providers.
- To ensure smooth transition for young people to adult services where ongoing needs have been identified
- To ensure review timetables for individual agreements are adhered to and children are not subject to 'drift' within specialist provision
- To track the progress of children and young people who have been presented to the panel to monitor the achievement of improved outcomes and utilise the information to develop more effective multi agency strategic planning processes
- To enable emerging 'issues/challenges' across agencies to be discussed and resolved
- Collating information to Inform Strategic planning to develop an integrated information data set for activity and finance that will be regularly updated and used to inform integrated commissioning strategies aimed at developing local services to meet the needs of this cohort of children

#### 4. Membership and attendance at Panel

The Membership of the High Needs Panel reflects the key agencies currently involved in the placement and planning for children with complex care needs. As a minimum and to be quorate this must include a representative from Commissioning, CCG, Education and Health the following:

- Commissioning – CCG
- Commissioning – Social Care
- Service Managers – Social Care
- Education – SEND Service Manager
- Education – Virtual School Head Teacher
- Health – Member of LAC Health Team

If the lead officer is not able to attend a panel meeting, alternative representation must be made to ensure all relevant agencies are represented and discussion are robust and decision making is shared across the partnership.

The High Needs panel will be chaired by the Deputy Strategic Director for Children Social Care. It is the expectation of this panel that as a minimum the 'lead professional' must attend the panel to present the assessment need and proposed multi-agency plan.

## 5. Scheduling of Panel

Approximately to be scheduled for first and third Thursday of every month between 2pm and 4pm and to be held at Gateshead Civic Centre or via TEAMS call.

## 6. Panel Format

The times will vary according to the number of new and review cases that will need to be discussed, each item gets a 15 minutes slot.

## 7. Pathway and Documentation

The High Needs paperwork and child in need assessment and review information must be provided to panel in addition to any health assessment or education assessment information.

The costs need to be outlined on the paperwork specifying the breakdown of what the cost delivers, and to detail the split of costs across health, education and social care.

The High Needs Panel Referral Form must be completed with input from all relevant professionals from education, health and social care.

Paperwork should be emailed to the Panel Administrator by midday, 1 week before the Panel meeting. As a minimum submission papers must include:

- High Needs Panel referral report
- Looked After review meeting minutes and commendations
- EHCP
- Commissioning costings for any proposed packages
- Child in Need Assessment
- Any other documentation the referrer may feel is required to support the request

## 8. Decision Making and Recording of Decisions

The Panel will be responsible for both service and financial decisions except for agreement to financial commitments beyond their delegated authority.

The chair will record the decisions on the Panel decision Form which will be sent to appropriate staff and for each individual child to the following identified leads.

It will be the responsibility of each Agency to record the decision within their own data or case management systems.

The Panel will develop a shared database to record the activity and decisions made within the panel – and this will be used to build an aggregate picture of collective needs.

### Outcome of Panel:

Decisions from the Panel will be summarised and signed off by the Chair of the Panel and representatives of each of the agency contributing to the funding of the case. In addition, the Panel Administrator will ensure that:

- Agendas are circulated at least one week prior to each meeting
- Team Managers or Assistant Managers are advised when their attendance is required
- That a summary of the discussion, key action points and decisions with rationale are duly recorded and circulated
- That the individual young person's report is updated with the decision and key action points
- That a copy of the decision is placed on the child's electronic file
- any request for attendance to core group or emergency meetings needs to be directed to the [childrencommissioning@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:childrencommissioning@gateshead.gov.uk) and officers from placements will be allocated to attend

## 9. Administration of Panel

The administration support for the Panel will be provided by Social Care Business Support services. Duties will include drawing up the agenda, arranging venues, scheduling of cases, circulating paperwork and maintaining the database.

## 10. Approval of Emergency placements made between Panel Meetings

If a decision to move a child to a highly specialised placement is needed in an emergency there should be effective interagency liaison before the child is placed to agree reason for the decision, purpose of the placement, and expected duration, and an agreement of the details of the placement and type of support required i.e. 1:1 / 2:1, transport requirements etc. Any placement made on an emergency basis should be regarded as an interim arrangement and must be agreed by the Deputy Strategic Director of Children Social Care and presented to the next High Needs Panel for retrospective approval with representatives of CCG, Education and Health.

## 11. Funding Arrangements

- Children with life limiting conditions and/ or complex health needs.
- Education costs are met by SEND if the child has an EHCP
- Education related transport costs are met by Education for children with EHCPs living within Gateshead and for those living outside Gateshead are met by Education from the Gateshead border
- Children needing end of life care
- Children previously "in MH Inpatient beds – S117" with ongoing MH support in placement
- Children at risk of CSE who have significant trauma through abuse, neglect or sexual assault who require therapeutic intervention, specifically as this is not available from existing Community NHS provision or Inpatient care.
- Children in need of LD Assessments – where this is not available in local NHS services, pre transition to Adult Services.
- Secure Welfare Beds (where MH assessments are required – not available preadmission from local community CAMHS teams)

- Where a higher-level provision is required to meet needs due to health needs whether this is in-house or with an external provider placement
- Residential Children's Homes (where therapy or nursing support is required as part of the package – because this is not available in a timely manner from the local CAMHS service or they do not provide for Children from out of Area or there is no community children's nursing service)
- Residential Short Breaks (where there is a complex health need, for example respiratory aids, gastric feeding tubes, or high need for qualified nursing support or significant behavioural support from Clinical Psychologists)
- Short Breaks non-residential – for children with complex health needs or life limiting conditions
- Foster placements with significant therapy or nursing need,
- Children who are eligible for "Children's Continuing Care"
- 52 week/ 38 week and Day provision at Independent Residential Schools and Colleges.
- Non-Residential Short Breaks – outreach and home care (where there is a significant health need)

## 12. Financial Monitoring

The panel will allocate and monitor the spending on placements to ensure that best value is applied to all requests and to ensure the appropriate use of resources.

High Needs Panel spend will be considered and reviewed by all agencies within their organisational finance monitoring mechanisms and trackers.

To forecast expenditure on placements and ensure seamless funding agreement processes short medium- and long-term need, and to capture all framework costs including DPS (Dynamic Purchasing System) and inhouse costs e.g. FACETS, Active Kids, Grove House, Spot purchasing by DCT team etc.

## 13. Review

Timescales for reviews at High Needs Panel are at the discretion of the panel or at least annually - unless permanence approval through the looked after process has been given. Cases need to be presented to High Needs Panel at least once a year following the placement's initial approval at Panel. If Panel decides, it may be every 3 or 6 months, but in any 12-month period every child in an Out of Borough placement needs to be at High Needs Panel. This doesn't include the initial approval of the external placement.

The panel procedures and terms of reference will be reviewed on an annual basis. The Panel members and chair need to look at whether the panel process is working properly for them, e.g. are they getting the right information, getting information in a timely manner, are reviews happening properly, are Social Workers and Team Managers aware of the referral process, attendance at Panel etc.

Data of reporting will be collated and will inform Local Authority finance panel on an annual basis. This will be shared with partner agencies.

## 14. Governance

All decisions will be based on a child's assessed needs and all decisions will ensure that proper consideration has been given to the arrangements for the child's health, education, development, cultural or linguistic and broader needs including the need for protection.

All decisions will clarify the expectation of the worker and timescales for any identified work to be completed.

All decisions and actions made by the High Needs Panel will be recorded for inclusion in the child's record and shared with all panel members.

The High Needs panel will ensure that all options to meet the child's needs without the provision of a placement have been fully explored and acted upon, e.g. family support services, family group conferences, placement with connected persons or friends and family.

All funding agreements will have a review timeframe agreed to come back to the panel for monitoring and scrutiny.

All information regarding the service user will be maintained using each partner's regular confidentiality and secure information systems

## 15. Operational Procedures

The following procedures apply to practitioners and managers in all three funding agencies and cover:

The initial identification of need and multi- agency assessment to be updated as appropriate. Joint health and social care assessment to be completed as and when required, if there is a health need.

