

Appendix Six

PROMPTS FOR CASE SUPERVISION

1. Clarity, focus and mandate of the assessment

- What is the assessment task in this situation?
- What is the purpose of this assessment?
- What questions need to be answered by this assessment?
- How clear are you about the assessment framework and protocols you should be using? (Rate on a 0 - 10 scale, where 0= not at all clear and 10 = very clear)
- What are your assessment roles and responsibilities, and who has lead responsibility?
- Which parts of the assessment process will be more challenging for you?
- How do you balance intuition and analysis in assessment work?
- What are the possible outcomes of this type of assessment?
- What are the limits to this assessment, for example, what can it not cover, what risks cannot be predicted?
- What support and guidance do you need from your supervisor?

2. The supervisee's initial views, assumptions and knowledge base

- What questions do you have about this assessment?
- List three assumptions you might have formed on the basis of the information in this case.
- If you had any bias in this case, what would it be?
- What beliefs do professionals already have about this family/person?
- What cultural or gender issues might arise in this assessment?
- What knowledge do you bring to this case? Where does it come from? Are there gaps in your knowledge?
- What previous experience do you have of assessment work in these cases? How do you think that might influence your approach?
- What was the outcome last time you worked with a similar child/family?
- How might you engage the user in this assessment, especially if this is a child/young person? Are there any barriers of language, access etc, that need to be considered.
- What questions/feelings might the user have about the assessment process?
- How often have they been assessed?
- What information does the user need in order to give informed consent to the assessment?
- What do you think will be the most challenging aspects of the assessment for the service user?
- How could you support their engagement?

3. Information gathering

- What are the key pieces of information required in this assessment?
- What do we already know?
- What don't we know?
- Where and who are the agency sources for this information?
- Who knows the family/person best?
- Which other agencies/services need to be involved in this assessment?
- What multi-disciplinary assessment policies/protocols apply here?
- How might other agencies see your role in this family?
- Is any agency likely to be difficult to engage? How might we address this?
- Would there be any benefit in undertaking some/all of the assessment on a co-worker basis or a multi-disciplinary basis?

- What contact and information from other agencies do you need?
- Which family members and friends need to be involved and in what order/grouping?
- How will the information be recorded?
- What is your role in evaluating the quality of the information from other agencies?
- What discrepancies in information exist?
- How do we test or resolve these?
- What contradictions have you/other professionals observed in the parent's behaviours toward the child?
- What information do we need from other agencies that we still do not have?

4. Supervisee/service user dynamics

- How would you describe your approach to assessment?
- What would I notice about it?
- How do you think Mrs X would describe your approach and style? If you had to describe the dynamics between you and the family/individual, would it be more like 'cat and mouse', 'pulling teeth', 'a shared voyage of discovery', 'just another assessment' or something else?
- How does your interaction with the service user help/hinder the assessment?
- What is easy/hard to talk about in this assessment?
- Which family members are harder to reach in this assessment?
- What, if any, contradictory/confusing signals have you picked up in the interaction between family members and yourself/other professionals?
- Who or what does this assessment remind you of?
- What has most surprised/concerned you about the family/person?
- To what extent does your experience of the family mirror the experience of individual family members and if so, why? What might this tell you about what is going on in this situation?
- What is your gut reaction about this family/individual? Where does this come from?

5. Supervisee's analysis

- What is becoming clearer? What is becoming less clear? What is unknown?
- What positive or concerning patterns are emerging?
- How long-standing are these patterns?
- To what extent does the information gathered confirm or challenge your initial impressions?
- What pieces of information are still not making sense or are ambiguous? How can we clarify these? What needs further assessment?
- How does the information gathered most likely explain the causes and consequences of the current concerns?
- What alternative explanations need to be considered?
- How do other agencies understand the situation? What are their concerns?
- What is the user's explanation of the situation?
- What do you think is the meaning of this situation to the parents/child?
- What risk and protective factors exist for the children/victims in this case?
- What might other agencies/the service users make of how we are thinking about this assessment and its implications?
- How can we test which explanation is likely to be more robust?
- What knowledge, theory, research, values and experience can help explain this situation and how it might develop?
- What specific outcomes for the child and the parents do we need to be seeing in order to address the issues identified?
- If there is no professional intervention, will things be better, worse or the same in six months' time? Think about the different family members involved.

6. Recommendations, decisions and plan

- What decisions do we need to make at this point?
- What options are there?
- To what extent do we have the information to make a decision at this point?
- What might be the pros and cons of different decisions? Who gains and who loses?
- What is negotiable and non-negotiable about this situation in relation to our agency's duties and responsibilities?
- To what extent is there agreement between agencies about the main concerns and how each agency will contribute to addressing these?
- What would a safe environment look like for this child?
- What one thing would the child ask us to address for her/him to feel safe?
- What services or interventions are required to address this child/s health or development needs?
- What specific outcomes have been, or need to be, identified in the plan for the child/parents?
- To what extent would these outcomes make sense to the child/parents in the light of the analysis and the assessment process? Will they come as a 'bolt out of the blue'?
- How clear are your roles and the roles of others, and the specific tasks in helping these outcomes become a reality?
- What evidence exists about the willingness and ability of the user to understand, engage with and address the concerns?
- What is motivating the family to cooperate?
- Where might the parents' motivation or capacity to change be weaker?
- What efforts have been made to aid change and with what success? Does this provide any grounds for optimism?
- How does the plan provide for monitoring and review against the intended outcomes?
- What is the contingency plan if these aren't achieved?
- How clear are you about the framework for writing an assessment report?
- Where in your report would it be helpful to draw explicitly on theory/research?
- How fair, clear, balanced and evidence based is the report? Is it clear how the decision/recommendation was arrived at?
- What is your plan for sharing the report with family members?

(Adapted from Covey 2004, Howe & Gray 2013)