

Child Protection Conference Decisions and Multi-Disciplinary Working in Family Safeguarding Model

Introduction

This guidance is intended to clarify the decision-making process for creating, continuing, and ending Child Protection Plans in Lancashire, taking into account the development of Multi-Disciplinary Team working in Family Safeguarding.

The background multi-agency procedures can be read at –

https://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_initial_cp_conf.html#decision_pro

Current position

Individual agencies and professionals are required to provide a recommendation and rationale about significant harm threshold and the need for a Child Protection Plan. The Chair will facilitate discussion to resolve disagreement but where consensus is not reached the decision will usually be made by majority. In Lancashire the Chair has the power to dissent from a unanimous or majority view at Conference, where they feel it is necessary to safeguard a child (see link above).

The development of multi-disciplinary team working means that professionals from different roles and disciplines will work together under the supervision of a CSC Team Manager. They will undertake specific work within the workbook / CP Plan and share this via group supervision and on to the Review Conference.

Decision Making at Conference

It is expected that in most scenarios the group supervision will reach a consensus view about the progress of the CP Plan and the criteria to step-down a CP Plan. Individual professionals within a multi-disciplinary team retain their professional and ethical duty to provide their insight to Conference and will be asked for their individual views on that basis.

The Chair will continue to promote discussion between professionals and agencies where consensus about significant harm threshold is not reached. If consensus is not possible then the views of each professional at Conference must be heard and recorded. It is then the Chair's responsibility to confirm the outcome of the Conference, considering the balance of information heard. The Chair is not bound by a simple numerical majority view at Conference and retains the ability to set aside a majority (or even a unanimous) view from Conference where they judge it to be unsatisfactory (see link to CSAP procedure).

Agencies retain their right to challenge or appeal decisions from Conferences via the established procedures.

Decisions about quoracy will be made on the same basis – where a Conference is not quorate in agency terms because the relevant service is being provided from within LCC (Substance Misuse Worker for example) then the Conference will be judged to be quorate. The guiding principle is that the Conference is able to make a safe and well-informed decision.