

Health and Wellbeing Board

15th July 2014

Introduction to Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH)

Recommendation(s)

This report has been requested by the board as a general introduction to Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs- (MASH) It does not include any recommendations.

1.0 Key Issues

1.1 The aim of any type of the MASH is to gather, analyse, assess and deliver complex information in a simple format to assist in decision making about what the needs and risks are, and what services are best equipped to meet those needs and reduce the risks.

Around the country the Multi- Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) has become one term used for a range of different information sharing, screening, assessing and decision-making processes and structures. Not all Local Authorities have something called a MASH but all are trying to address the same issues.

There is no consistent membership of a MASH and this seems to depend on local relationships as to who has signed up to provide either staff and/or access to their data. Most have been additional to existing services and have required funding for staff, IT and in some cases premises.

Devon LSCB led the development of the first MASH implemented between April 2010 and April 2011. The Devon MASH includes local authority children's social care, police, health services and education co-located in one office. There are also virtual links to the early years team in children's centres; the youth offending team; probation; both children's and adults' mental health; housing; and the ambulance service.

Like Devon, many MASHs are based only on the children and young people who have been referred to Children's Social Care (Reading, London MASH Model, Calderdale, Wiltshire) and some are only available once a CP threshold is likely to be met (Sandwell). These models are focused on whether the thresholds for Child Protection are met or not.

Some authorities have developed the social care duty and assessment service to create a multi-agency interface for consultation, discussion and decision making for the provision of both Early Help and Social Work services (Cheshire East). Others have additional potential: Leicestershire and Hampshire are both interesting examples.

Leicestershire

Leicestershire has been chosen as a Centre of Excellence for Information Sharing. They have their MASH Multi-Agency Screening Team located as part of their early help offer, which is coordinated through the Supporting Leicestershire Families (SLF) programme under the Troubled Families initiative.

Leicestershire MASH summaries are produced for regular multi- agency meetings in the District localities. The locality meetings are chaired by the Serving Leicestershire Families hub coordinators, who request services to provide assessment and support and use the MASH summaries to help decide what is the most appropriate support. The locality professionals discuss the MASH summary and if appropriate can allocate someone in the professional network to do an early help assessment. Although centred around children and young people, the MASH do the checks on all members of the household (including when people are not related).

Leicestershire MASH is separate from the First Response service for Social Care. The First Response team can request a MASH summary and refer to the Locality Team for an early help package of support to be offered. The Child Protection work identified by First Response is followed up by the relevant SW team who are in the process of setting up a co-located CP joint investigation service with the police. At present the social work assessment team and police do not use their MASH for their lateral checks.

Hampshire

Hampshire recently had an Ofsted of Children's Services and came out as good with outstanding features.

The Hampshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) provides triage and multi-agency assessment of safeguarding concerns in respect of vulnerable children and adults. It brings together professionals from a range of agencies including Children's Social Care Assessment Staff, Adult Safeguarding, Police Vulnerable People referral unit for Hampshire, , Children's Safeguarding Nurse, Approved Mental Health Practitioners,(AMPs) with access to Adult MH data and EDT. The MASH team collate their shared information and make assessments and decisions to ensure that vulnerable children and adults are responded to quickly and efficiently by the most appropriate professional.

Leicestershire and Hampshire are very different from each other but can both provide a broader way of thinking about the benefits of the hub approach and how these could be applied to Warwickshire.

2.0 Options and Proposal

The possibility of a MASH of some kind in Warwickshire is being explored through the Front Door Interfaces Project which commenced in

March 2014 with the appointment of the Interim Project Lead- Jill Forrest.

The Project is in 3 phases:

1. Scoping 3rd March to 30th June 2014
2. Decision Making based on the Options Paper and Proposed Model July 2014
3. Implementation PID once a way forward is agreed

3.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

3.1 No decision is required at this Board. The full options paper and a proposed model will be available for consideration very soon.

Background papers

1. Background paper 1
2. Background paper 2 etc.

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