

Health and Wellbeing Board

Meeting Date 22-09-2014

Introduction to Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) and update of the current position in Warwickshire

Recommendation(s)

That the Board notes the current position in Warwickshire and considers and comments on the plans to develop a MASH

1.0 Key Issues

General introduction to Multi- Agency Safeguarding Hubs- (MASH)

1.1 The aim of any type of the MASH is to gather, analyse, assess and deliver complex information about a child or vulnerable adult in need in a simple format to assist in decision making about what the needs and risks are, and what services can best meet those needs and reduce the risks for that vulnerable person.

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.

1.2 Critical factors to consider include:

- The size of the area served and the complexity of organisations working together
- Clarity of existing thresholds for services and pathways for care
- Whether the MASH is to focus on referrals (where the author feels a crisis is emerging) or whether a wider scope is required ie: if insufficient arrangements exist at CAF early intervention
- Whether a “think family” approach is required involving all ages of vulnerable people
- Which agencies will be involved as complexity increases exponentially
- Potential access arrangements in large geographical areas
- How interfaces with statutory agency services will be maintained in parallel to the MASH service – or if the MASH will be more “virtually” delivered.
- Data sharing issues, including how to identify trends and patterns (such as how that would help to identify CSE)

Although there are other examples set out below, Warwickshire clearly needs to carefully tailor a response for our configuration, community needs and response capacity

1.3 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.

Update on the current position in Warwickshire

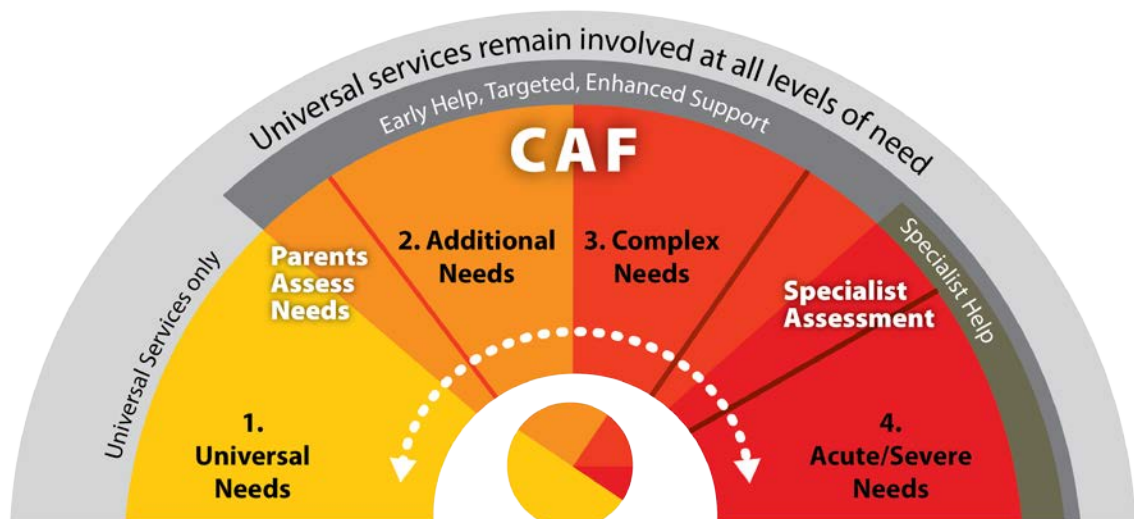
The possibility of a MASH of some kind in Warwickshire has been researched and explored since February 2014 working with partners in Police and Health

The MASH Project is in 3 phases:

Phase 1 – Scoping- 3rd March to 30th June 2014

Threshold for service approved by LSCB –
<http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/wscbresources> Appendix 17

The interim Project Lead completed a Scoping Paper with a proposal for an enhanced MASH model for Warwickshire, which would include Consultation, Information Sharing and Short Assessments in a co-located Hub, diagrammatically set out, as referrals are made



Phase 2 - Decision Making

A strategic working group met on 6th August to consider the proposal and the potential risks and benefits of the different aspects of the proposed model and agree next steps towards reaching a position where services can make decisions.

Phase 3 - Implementation if there is a decision to implement a MASH in Warwickshire

2.0 Options and Proposal

The MASH Project requires

- 1.1 A decision whether or not there is leadership support for further work to progress a Multi- Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) of some sort in Warwickshire.
- 1.2 If so a multi-agency MASH Executive Board with Chair would be needed to progress the MASH Project.
- 1.3 The MASH Executive Board would be responsible for agreeing the Project Team and who will chair the project meetings and provide the highlight reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board
- 1.4 The Project Team members would then lead the working groups

3.0 Background papers

None

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