

Strategic Partnership Boards

SAFETY SAFEGUARDING WELLBEING

Spotlight on...

Improving practice

The Learning and Improving Practice Forum oversees all learning activity across the four strategic boards and this includes a multi-agency audit programme.

- **Multi-agency** means everyone who worked with the family, for example health, social care, education, housing, voluntary organisation, and police etc.
- **An audit** is how agencies look at how they have worked with individuals and reflect on whether the practice was as expected or if improvements are needed.
- **Statutory reviews** each have their own criteria and include Serious Case Reviews, Safeguarding Adult Reviews and Domestic Homicide Reviews which are generally completed when someone dies or is seriously harmed as a result of abuse or neglect and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively to protect the adult or child.

We always use a Think Family approach when completing audits and reviews. This means that we think about how each individual in the family affects and relates to other family members and we consider all members of the family and what their needs are.

We are keen to share our learning through the partnership and cascade key messages.



Please send/ cascade this spotlight to your colleagues, staff and networks and discuss in your team and management meetings.

If you want to join the email address for spotlights and other information please email

Strategicpartnerships@walthamforest.gov.uk

Multi-agency audit: Modern Slavery

Modern Slavery is identified as a type of abuse or neglect and is predicated to have

10 000- 13 000 victims in the UK. As a cross cutting priority group of the Boards an

audit was led by Adult Social Care and multi-agency partners attended. The main themes of the Modern Slavery were domestic servitude and criminal exploitation.

Strengths we found in the Modern Slavery Audit

- ✓ Action was taken to safeguard adults;
- ✓ Frontline practitioners in various agencies spotted the signs and made appropriate referrals;
- ✓ Good collaboration with partners in different parts of the country;
- ✓ Police were alerted and involved in every case identified.

Some of the findings remind us to:

- To use the Think Family approach;
- Record all evidence of multi-agency working and any action taken;
- Ensure potential victims are spoken to alone;
- Use appropriate interpreters, ensure family members and friends are not relied on for this.

Multi-agency audit: Multi-agency working in a Think Family way

42 practitioners, plus 6 facilitators from across adult and children services took part in this audit. The partnership, across all boards in Waltham Forest promotes a Think Family approach but a lack of this approach is present in audit and review work. Further exploration of this took place to improve practice.

Strengths we found in the Multi-Agency Audit

- ✓ Good mapping of all agencies involved and multi-agency working;
- ✓ Positive use of **Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment** assessment in cases involving domestic abuse;
- ✓ Use of specialist services such as counselling;
- ✓ Joint working with the housing department.

Some of the findings remind us to:

- Be more curious, ask questions and be interested in all aspects of the families;
- Have challenging conversations;
- Make use of the escalation process;
- Ensure the child or service user is heard and they are influencing their assessment.

Serious Case Review: Fartuun & Halgan

Two sisters were removed from school by their mother and taken to Somaliland. They were enrolled in a school where they were to be de-westernised. After being physically abused they contacted the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and with support from police and children social care in the UK they were safely returned to the UK. Click [here](#) to view the full SCR on the Strategic Partnerships webpage.

As Practitioners we need to:

- Feel more comfortable and confident about having challenging and uncomfortable conversations with parents and other professionals, as part of being professionally curious;
- Recognise when children are missing education and be curious about this, even if this is not our area of work or focus with a family;
- Support the transfer of information for children at points of transition between schools and boroughs, primary to secondary and secondary to college.

Learning from Adult Local Authority Designated Officer

Reminding us of the importance of speaking to those being cared for alone so the individual can express their view freely, particularly if the individual has concerns about the person that is caring for them. We must not presume that their carer will know or understand more than the adult and convey the adult's view. We must be open to the possibility that a carer can also be abusive towards the person they care for, and this includes carers that are also health and social care professionals.

Where to go for more information...



- Click [here](#) to view Learning and Improving practice documents including the Think Family brief and video guides;
- Click [here](#) to view the escalation process for children and [here](#) to view the escalation process for adults.

