

MULTI AGENCY AUDIT: CSA IN THE FAMILY ENVIRONMENT

March 2020

How effectively does current practice protect children who are subject, or at risk, of sexual abuse in the family environment?

What are we doing well?

- The quality and timeliness of the initial response to intrafamilial CSA was found to be good overall.
- Where a s47 was required it was completed in a timely way in all but one case and in all cases the s47 outcome was appropriate.
- In all cases the child has received a timely assessment, and this was judged to be good overall (this includes the assessments completed by children's social work, health, CSARC and the CSA Support Service).
- In most cases the interventions have been timely and effective.
- There is strong evidence of the child being engaged in the process at all stages with good examples of the child's voice being heard.
- The therapeutic needs of the child and family are being/have been addressed in most cases.

What do we need to improve?



1

The SARC should be contacted **by telephone** and a discussion with the SARC Doctor should take place for all children where there is an allegation of sexual harm. **This applies to all children whether they are children in care; already on a plan or not known to services.**

To make it clearer about who to contact and how, the Sussex Child Sexual Abuse Pathway has been refreshed and a set of scenarios e.g. Forensic; Non Forensic; Out of hours etc has been produced: **Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures 3.1. Recognition and Referral of Abuse and Neglect**

2

Strategy discussions should involve all the relevant agencies, including health and in particular the SARC.

3

Once a strategy discussion is completed, the key actions should be circulated within 24 hours of the meeting.

4

It is important that safeguarding processes involving children in care are properly followed and recorded even though the children are safe (e.g. there may be a tendency not to convene a strategy discussion as the child is safe). See pp17 and 51: **'Claire' SCR, Croydon Safeguarding Children Board, March 2017**

5

Decisions (made by the Police) to 'Not For Action' (NFA) without completing the actions agreed in the strategy discussion meeting must go back to the meeting for consultation.