



# Surrey Children's services involvement

June 2022

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- SCS were first involved with Mary in 2002 when her parents reported they were struggling to cope with Mary's behaviour. This was telephone contact only.
  - During April 2014-June 2015 a Child Protection Plan was put in place for Mary's children due to the fact she had taken cocaine whilst pregnant.
  - From February 2017 to November 2017 CSC were extensively involved with the children in the final three months of Mary's life.



# Lessons Identified

- Better social work input to MARAC
- The use of neglect as a category for Child Protection Plans where domestic abuse is a factor
- Closer working with the police around criminal process when children witness / experience domestic abuse
- The need for vigilance in managing confidential information

# Actions to be implemented/ Developments in practice

- Better support for families involved in care proceedings.
- Implementation of the Family Safeguarding Model in April 2019.
- Whole system' approach aims to improve the quality of work undertaken with families (both parents and children) and focuses on meeting the needs of parents so they can meet the needs of their children. To keep more children within their families where it is safe to do so.
- It utilises motivational interviewing.
- Based around a multi-agency approach including, social workers and family workers, domestic abuse practitioners (supporting the victim), domestic abuse officer (working with the perpetrator), recovery worker who works with adults around their alcohol / drugs use, mental health practitioner who works with parents experiencing mental health difficulties v.a clinical psychologist who works with parents to support their behaviour and parenting skills.
- Early identification of support to families in their wider network including extended family and friends. Also identified in the Independent Review of Social Work (March 2022).

- Better support for families involved in care proceedings.

The recent Independent Review of Children's Social Care (March 2022) looking at 'a just and decisive child protection system' (pg. 67-92)

Key theme: the report proposes three important ways of improving parents' engagement in child protection:

- a) adequate help offered to family to enable them to make changes;
- b) compassionate and respectful interaction with families across the board;
- c) independent representation and advocacy for parents.

Key theme: seeking to overcome structural and technological barriers to effective information sharing.

## Actions to be implemented/ Developments in practice

- Need for Continuity of key worker in child protection.
- Staffing pressures and over reliance on locums continues to be an issue.
- There are currently work streams in place looking at recruitment and retention.
- Introduction of the Memorandum between Local Authorities.
- The recent Independent Review of Children's Social Care recognises the need to realise the potential of the work force.