**SESLIP Quality Assurance Leads Meeting – 17 September 2020**

1. **Attendees:**

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| Bracknell Forest | Kogie | Perumall |
| Brighton and Hove | Justin | Grantham |
| Hampshire | Stuart | Ashley (Chair) |
| Hampshire | Amanda | Meadows |
| Isle of Wight | Simon | Dear |
| Kent | Debbie | Beale |
| Kent | Julie | Maguire |
| Medway | Becky | Cooper |
| Oxfordshire | Tan | Lea |
| Portsmouth | Karley | Middleton |
| Slough | Sandra | Davies |
| Surrey | Carol | Adamson |
| West Berkshire | Nicky | Robertson |
| Windsor and Maidenhead | Shungu | Chigocha |
| Wokingham | Liz | McCauley |
| SESLIP consultant | Diane | Williamson |

**Apologies:**

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| Brighton and Hove | Tina | James |
| East Sussex | Douglas | Sinclair |
| East Sussex | Lou | Carter |
| Milton Keynes | Sophie | Marshall |
| Southampton | Stuart | Webb |
| West Sussex | Claire | Lawton |
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1. **Matters Arising from 2 June meeting -none**
2. **Summary of Around the Region Updates:**
   * **Hants**
   * Initial dip in referrals then back to normal in May, despite low school attendance. Increase in public referrals and referrals started to increase from June with above normal activity in in September creating pressure in the system
   * QA activity has kept going as business as usual, using the same practice standards and some improved compliance
   * **Surrey**
   * Increase in contacts and referrals
   * CP conferences have been maintained and Surrey has introduced a hybrid model with the chair, social worker and parents in the room with other professionals attending virtually
   * Forward planning for LAC reviews with individual risk assessments to try to move to face to face reviews
   * QA – since June monthly case audit is back up and running, a challenge alongside thematic audits. Focus has been on quality of visits and management oversight.
   * Supported by partners in practice Essex to do spot checks alongside area SEFs to try to get countywide consistency
   * **Medway**
   * First monitoring visit by Ofsted was cancelled and finally took place 3 weeks ago – positive that the authority is going in the right direction
   * Promoting QA focus on audit with internal moderation
   * 100% CP conferences and LAC reviews all virtual.
   * Hybrid CP conferences now introduced with social worker and family in the family home and everyone else dialling in
   * Seen a reduction in CP Plans in line with the improvement plan. Achieved through reviews of CP plans over 18 months and older young people alongside development of adolescent service. Shift in culture to see CIN as a positive alternative, developed a CIN reviewing post.
   * Seen increase in LAC admissions and undertaking analysis and tracking of this – early indicators are that some have ben known for a long time and lockdown exacerbated the issues; some teenagers linked to county lines where risks and behaviours were too difficult for parents to cope with
   * **Kent**
   * Seen some increase in front door, anticipating CP increase but not seen it yet
   * QA back on track with monthly audits
   * Developed a diagnostic tool, focus on S47 and missing (Kent agreed to share focused audit tools)
   * About to test a hybrid CP conference model
   * Undertook joint work with adult services after identifying an increase in female suicides
   * Planning annual thematic audit to overlay with training and development plan
   * **Brighton & Hove**
   * Front door is busy and anticipating a peak in October
   * CP and LAC increasing with a steady number coming into the system but less ending, possibly related to professional anxiety
   * Audit -100% compliance in Q1
   * Financial challenges combined with pressure in the system
   * Priority is to get the front door fully back together co-located in the office
   * Testing out hybrid conferences but need to manage anxiety
   * Undertaking focused work on BAME, including multi-agency BAME audit
   * Management oversight of CIN and focus on CIN is becoming embedded
   * **Bracknell Forest**
   * Slight increase in referrals and ICPC, no increase in LAC admissions
   * Focus on school attendance
   * Audit ongoing
   * QA focus on quality of visiting
   * CP conferences – adapting a building to facilitate social distancing, working towards hybrid conferences
   * Families have given mixed feedback about virtual conferences
   * Starting staff return to offices next week
   * **Wokingham**
   * Put initial checks and balances in place, developed COVID standards and COVID audits
   * Revisited focused audits of safety planning and CIC planning
   * Reviewing core audit tools
   * About to do neglect audit and found SESLIP library of tools helpful
   * Wokingham agreed to share focused audit tools and revised core audit tool
   * All highly vulnerable children have been seen face to face throughout COVID and face to face visiting of other children has started to increase
   * Slight increase in CPP, some CP plans have been ceasing with close eye on stepdown
   * 4 rapid reviews during COVID period
   * **Portsmouth**
   * Planning return to the office with MASH already back
   * Seen increase in UASC, over 10 in the last week
   * Rolling out MOMO, https://mindofmyown.org.uk/
   * **West Berkshire**
   * Most activity is stable
   * QA – themed COVID audit
   * CP visiting has been as business as usual with visits undertaken outside/ in the garden so therefore have not been counted as stat visits
   * LAC visits now face to face
   * Launched the new framework with workshops
   * CP/IRO monitoring is planned
   * **Windsor and Maidenhead**
   * Increase in demand through the system- referrals, open cases CP Plan ( 16% increase is being interrogated)court applications
   * On positive note also seen increase in applications for permanent social work posts so decrease in agency staff
   * Continuing with 3 months dip sample audits that have been positive
   * **Isle of Wight**
   * Very different experience than Hampshire, despite same practice model and QAF
   * Contacts, performance and QA have all dipped. Improvement plan in pace delegating more to Team Managers so they own practice
   * Seen increase in neglect
   * Increase in caseloads despite no increase in front door – reduced CIN closure so checking focus of CIN work
   * Virtual Come Dine with Me for LAC with senior managers and Members went well
   * Reduction of NEET during lockdown – hypothesis that young people have taken time to reflect and refocus
   * **Oxfordshire**
   * Referral and assessment have increased with other areas of activity only showing marginal changes
   * Whilst seeing higher levels of children in school now also seeing higher level of home educated children which needs monitoring
   * Transformation agenda continuing with emphasis on introducing Family Safeguarding Model and changes to CSE service broadening within Contextual Safeguarding
   * Launched the new QAF which can be found on SESLUIP website
   * Training Auditors with a “what good looks like” pack -Oxfordshire agreed to share this

* **Slough**
  + Undertaking focused look at Children Placed with Parents
  + DFE advisors in the authority during lockdown – led improvement workshop with focus on front door QA
  + Seen increase in contacts and referrals, big increase in caseloads and now significant outlier for CP plans with a lack of ceasing CP plans -this may warrant further analysis by the group to understand the story behind it
  + Covid risk assessments undertaken prior to face to face visits
  + Staff in office on a rota basis
  + Transformation programme is building management capacity
  + Changes to arrangements between the Trust and Council

1. **Themes Around the Region**
   * QA activity is largely continuing as business as usual
   * Mixed picture of impact of COVID on service demand, with some areas seeing significant increases in both front door and CP plans – may warrant further analysis by the group to understand the story behind
   * CP conferences have been going ahead, mainly virtually with a number of authorities starting to implement hybrid models. GP attendances at virtual conferences appears to have been a success
   * Hypothesis that ceasing CP plans (and possible LAC discharges) are slower because of professional anxiety or CP plans not progressing
   * A number of authorities are undertaking focused work on purposeful CIN work
   * Financial challenges are exacerbated by increase in demand
   * Learning from the COVID effect on the workplace and remote working. Most authorities are looking at the balance of office and remote working but consensus abut co-location of MASH is a priority
2. **How do LAs assess, monitor and QA the CP and reviewing services – item led by RBWM**
   * **Medway –** work in progress
   * **Hants/IOW –** the QA service QA their own services as well as the operational services. Had questions about the quality of IRO/CP footprint in the case audit but found that auditors (TMngrs) were reluctant to comment. In line with CSC main operational QA Framework, we are establishing a section for IRS which will include audits and observations
   * **Oxfordshire -**HOS and Service Manager undertake QA work of the CP/IRO service
   * **Bracknell Forest -**  manager observes practice, feedback from teams
   * **Wokingham –** observation of conferences; learning from complaints. Created some steps in mosaic to make footprint more visible plus they can provide quarterly reports on midway reviews, pre review meetings and contacts with children and DRPs which gives good information and identifies IROs who are not doing as much between reviews
   * **West Berkshire** - Quality of practice with IRO and CP is built within our new case file learning audit tool about to go live. The service manager undertakes practice observations of all IRO/CPCs although lockdown has impacted on ability to do this. Also reads all consultation/feedback documents which arrive in the service. There are feedback tools which go out to all professionals and family which are specific to the quality of conferences and review, but return rates are rather low despite efforts to encourage others to return this. The IRO/CPCs undertake regular themed audit activity and complete a file audit on every child's case file before every conference and review.
   * **Slough -** We embed in normal audit with a section on footprint of IRO, manager undertakes observations of practice and IROs and CP Chairs all participate in the core audit activity. We also encourage challenge from operational services and we are now starting to record these with our responses as evidence of reviews, feedback and learning

**Action - LA’s to share ideas and have further discussion at next meeting**

1. **Ofsted Update**
   * Hampshire have pulled together a helpful presentation about the new arrangements. Presentation will be circulated with the notes of the meeting and uploaded onto the QA web page
2. **Supporting Triad DCS Peer Challenges**
   * The SESLIP Steering Group is keen for the QA network to support the DCS Peer Challenges scheduled for January and February 2021. They are looking for QA managers to help with the understanding of each other’s data and the story behind it, including whether the data is reliable and useful and to give some assurance.
   * The DCSs are looking for a briefing from the QA lead ahead of the DCS challenge meeting with the idea being that it links to the evidence of the LA’s strengths and areas for improvement.
   * QA leads triangulating other evidence from the QA process with the data to highlight whether the indicators are reliable/trustworthy; nonsense or need further interrogation/understanding
   * The triad dates are outlined below and the meetings will be held virtually

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Triad No** | **Date** | **LA1** | **LA2** | **LA3** |
| 2 | 12 January 2021 | **WEST SUSSEX** | **KENT** | **PORTSMOUTH** |
| 6 | 13 January 2021 | **BRACKNELL FOREST** | **READING** | **SOUTHAMPTON** |
| 1 | 29 January 2021 | **WOKINGHAM** | **EAST SUSSEX** | **SURREY** |
| Quartet 3 | 1st February 2021 | **SLOUGH** | **HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT** | **MILTON KEYNES** |
| 5 | 8 February 2021 | **WEST BERKSHIRE** | **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE** | **BRIGHTON AND HOVE** |
| 4 | 10 February 2021 | **WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD** | **OXFORDSHIRE** | **MEDWAY** |

* + QA Leads have access to the SESLIP benchmarking data and DCS Peer Challenge Library area of the SESLIP website where the challenge packs and SEFS are held:

<https://www.seslip.co.uk/data-benchmarking-group/restricted-reports>

<https://www.seslip.co.uk/peer-challenge/dcs-restricted-reports/peer-challenge-library>

* + The group felt that greater clarity was needed about their role in this and where it sits with data leads. It may be useful for the data leads to join any discussions
  + Most of the QA leads already have access to and use the benchmarking data
  + QA leads have varying levels of involvement in the preparation of the SEF
  + Diane explained that this is going to be work in progress and we will work out what works as we go along
  + Wokingham volunteered, Surrey, Kent, Southampton and Portsmouth had expressed interest previously

**Action:**

**Authorities that are interested in taking this forward to let Diane know. Diane will then set up a meeting/(s) to take forward in November and December ahead of the challenge days**

1. **AOB and next steps:**
   * The website resource is being well used and members are encouraged to send audit tools for sharing and practice standards to Diane
   * SESLIP published the Models of Social Work paper over the summer which outlines the models being used across the region; contacts for each model and evaluation of the models -**Diane will circulate it to the group**
   * Next meeting will be held virtually again on 9th December 10am-12.30pm
2. **Summary of Actions:**
   * **Kent to share focused audit tools**
   * **Wokingham to share focused audit tools and revised core audit tool**
   * **Oxfordshire to share training auditors pack - “what good looks like”**
   * **LAs to share information about how they QA the CP and IRO service**
   * **QA leads to let Diane know of they are interested in the supporting Triad DCS challenge process and Diane will support**
   * **Diane to circulate Hampshire’s Ofsted presentation**
   * **Diane to circulate Models of Social Work paper**