

Children's Services Support Hub

Guidance for Practitioners September 2021

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Introduction to the Children's Services Support Hub:

Our data analysis over the past 12 months has evidenced a consistently high number of referrals into Children's Services that do not meet the threshold for statutory services. Almost 85% of referrals are stepped down to Early Help or Universal Services.

To achieve a high standard of service for families in need of support and protection, demand management of the 'front vestibule' is essential. In November 2021 Lancashire will launch the Children's Services Support Hub. A discreet team within the MASH function that processes all requests for service that do not meet threshold for statutory services.

Families will be signposted to wider early help provision accordingly and in line with the Continuum of need and principles of the Working Well with Children and Families document.

For example: Families that require support under Level 3 of the CON will be processed through to the Family Intense Support Team within CFW.

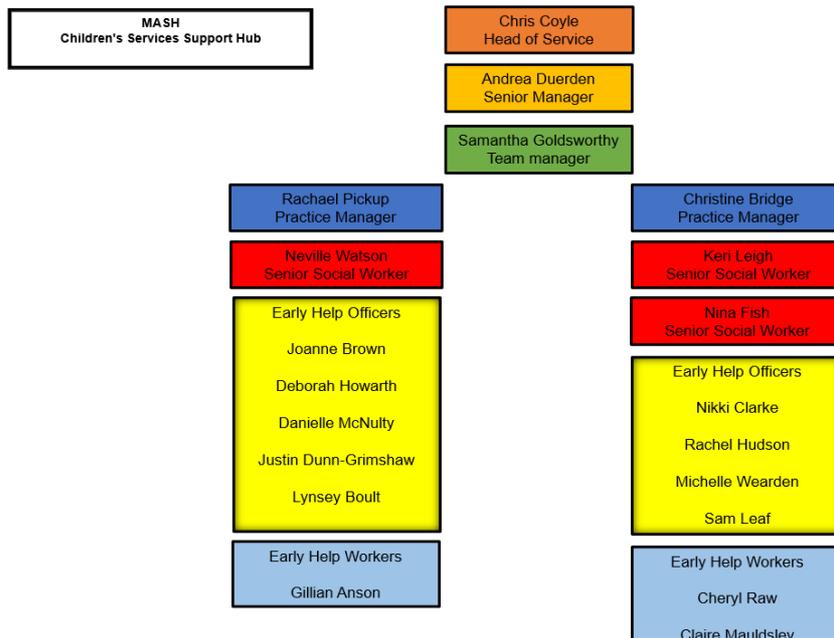
Those that may benefit from support under Level 2 of the CON will be re-directed to Lancashire's Early Help Offer. It will be the responsibility of partner agencies involved with such families to refer directly into specific need led services.

The changes above allow increased capacity for social workers within the MASH to undertake timely, informative enquiries on level 4 referrals and provide a swift response for those that are most in need of statutory services.

In line with the proposed launch of 'one point of contact' into Children's Services, all referrals into MASH/ CSSH will be made via a Request for Support E-Form. This document will replace the current Multi Agency Referral Form and is due to be launched in November 2021.

This referral form has been updated so that it encompasses all the provisions in Children's Services, inclusive of CFW and will be incorporated into the EHM case recording system.

Team Structure



The Children's Services Support Hub sits within Lancashire's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub; strategic and operational oversight continues to sit with Andrea Duerden and Samantha Goldsworthy. The team consists of:

2 x Practice Managers: responsibilities include supervisory responsibility for the Senior Social Workers and Early Help Officers. Oversight, direction, and approval of work produced by their team. Contribution to effective team development, performance, and opportunities for learning.

3 x Senior Social Workers: responsibilities include supervisory responsibility for the Early Help Workers, provide support and advice to the staffing team and to lead on any cases that require escalation to statutory assessments. Liaising with the district CFW Team Managers on cases of concern.

9 x Early Help Officers: responsibilities include screening of requests for support under level 3 of the CON, progressing requests under the relevant pathways and application of threshold. Promoting collaborative working together with the Early Help Partnership Officers. Providing a duty telephone line for early help queries.

3 x Early Help Workers: responsibilities include screening of requests for support under level 2 of the CON, progressing requests under the relevant pathways into CFW and CANW as well as promoting access to wider early help services.

Please note: Roles and responsibilities may vary as the team develops

Timescales:

There are 3 Risk Assessment Grades (RAG) that Practice Managers identify at the point of initial screening within MASH. This determines the timescales for decision making and processing of referrals:

CON level 4 (Section 47) – 1 hour

CON level 4 (Section 17) - 24 hours

CON level 3 (FIS) – 24 hours

CON level 2 (Universal Plus) – 48 hours

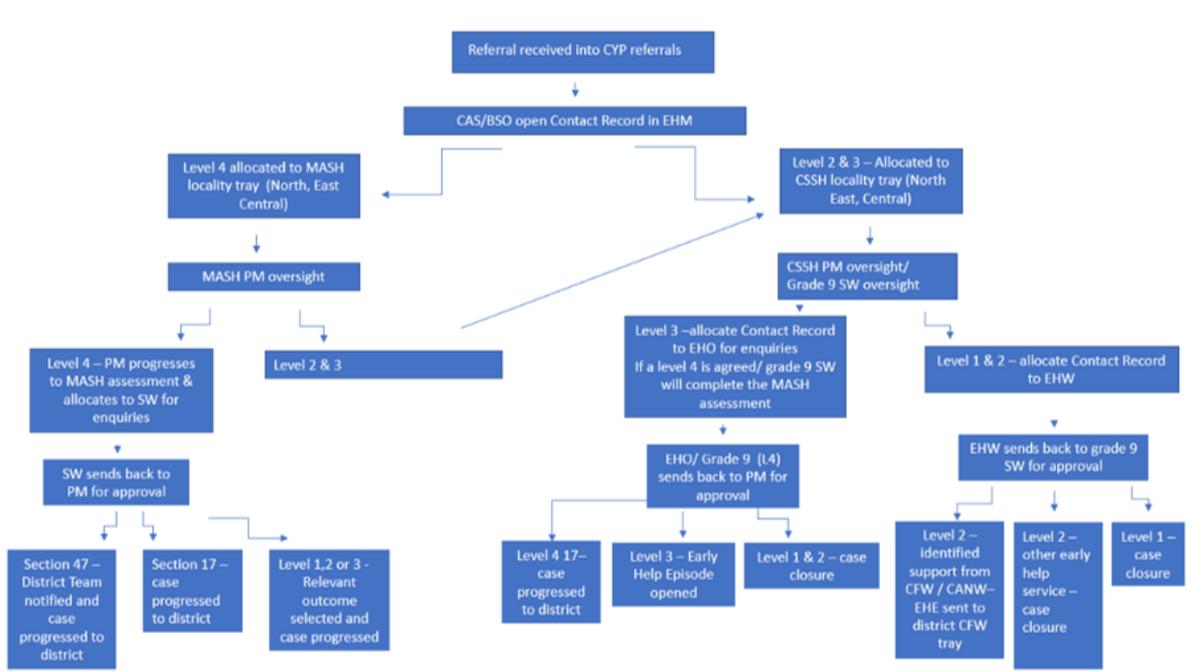
CON level 1 (Universal services) – 48 hours

Consent

All requests for support received into MASH will be expected to have clear consent from a person with parental responsibility unless there is sufficient evidence to support the overriding of consent. This includes evidence that the child/ young person is likely to suffer significant harm without the input from statutory services/,or has already suffered significant harm.

Request for Support Pathways

The diagram below shows the pathway of requests for support received into MASH/CSSH:



Level 4 (screening undertaken by a qualified social worker) – consent can be overridden if there is sufficient evidence that a child/ young person is at risk of significant harm/ has suffered significant harm.

Level 4 requests for support will be automatically allocated to MASH for practice manager oversight. This will include a RAG rating and a rationale for initial threshold application. The practice manager progresses the case to a MASH assessment and reassigns to a social worker for screening using the assessment template.

Multiagency enquiries will take place whereby a social worker will gather information from the family and relevant partners to inform the analysis and threshold application.

This is then re-assigned back to the practice manager for final oversight and approval.

If the practice manager agrees that threshold is met for a statutory assessment, a C&F assessment will be initiated and re-assigned to the district duty teams for allocation.

If the referrer is a professional, they will be notified of the outcome of the request for support – either by telephone, email, or written correspondence.

Please note: If the practice manager considers the referral to be level 2/3 upon initial screening, this will be redirected to the CSSH for further enquiries.

Level 3 (screening undertaken by Early Help Officer) – consent led service

Level 3 requests for support will be allocated to CSSH for practice manager oversight. This will include a RAG rating and a rationale for initial threshold application. The practice manager will assign the contact record to the early help officer for screening using the assessment template.

Multi agency enquiries will take place whereby the early help officer will gather information from family and relevant partners to inform the analysis and threshold application.

The contact record is then re-assigned back to the practice manager for final oversight and approval.

If the practice manager agrees that threshold is met for Family Intense Support (level 3) an early help episode will be initiated and re-assigned to the locality CFW tray for allocation.

If the referrer is a professional, they will be notified of the outcome of the request for support – either by telephone, email, or written correspondence

Please note: If following enquiries, the practice manager agrees threshold for level 4 is met, the case will progress to a MASH assessment and allocated to a Senior Social Worker within the CSSH.

If during enquiries contact with the family has not been established within the 24-hour timeframe, and the early help officer and senior social worker agree that a home visit would be beneficial, the senior social worker will liaise with the locality

CFW Team Manager to review the case and explore whether a duty home visit is required. This will be recorded on the contact record by the senior social worker.

Level 2 (screening undertaken by early help workers) – consent led service

Level 2 requests for support into CFW and Child Action North West will be allocated to CSSH for senior social worker oversight. This will include a RAG rating and a rationale for initial threshold application. The senior social worker will assign the contact record to the early help worker for enquiries.

Multi agency enquiries may take place if clarity is required of the family/ individual needs to identify the most appropriate provision of support under the wider early help offer. Contact may also be made with a person or persons with parental responsibility to obtain consent.

This is then re-assigned back to the senior social worker for final oversight and approval.

If the referrer is a professional, they will be notified of the outcome of the request for support – either by telephone, email, or written correspondence

Please note: Any requests for support into CFW or CANW must have an open Early Help Assessment to meet the criteria for the service.

Requests for Information

Requests for information must be submitted using the 'request for support' e-form. There will be a specific section for information requests that will be a mandatory field.

Once received, requests for information will be assigned to MASH and screened by a practice manager before a response is prepared.

Referral Responses

Referral responses must be sent to all professionals who have submitted a request for service into MASH. The referral response will include the outcome of the enquiries, threshold rationale and identified plan of support the family/ individual can be referred to (should this not meet threshold for statutory services).

The referrer may be informed of the outcome of the request for support via telephone, email, or written corre

We aim to send referral responses within 24 hours

Call Backs for children not known/ not open to CSC

Professional callers: 0300 123 6720
0300 123 6722 (Emergency Duty Team)

In addition to accepting e-form requests for support, our MASH service also provide a telephone advice line for professionals who require urgent safeguarding advice.

The advice line operates on a call back system, our customer access advisors will request your contact details, reference to the CON and a summary of your concerns/ reason for the call. This information will be passed to a member of staff within the MASH who will provide a response.

Below is a summary of the call back process under each level of the CON:

Level 4 (Section 47)

If you are calling to raise a section 47 request your details and nature of the call will be taken, and a call back request assigned to a social worker who will respond within 1 hour.

Level 4 (Section 17)

Telephone referrals for level 4 (section 17) will not be accepted over the telephone, a request for support e-form must be completed if you require an assessment by CSC. Your information will be shared with a social worker for 'information only'. You may not receive a call back.

Level 3 (family Intense Support)

Telephone referrals for Level 3 support will not be accepted over the telephone. A request for support e-form must be completed if you require a referral into 'Family Intense Support'. Your information will be shared with the support hub for 'information only', you may not receive a call back.

Level 2 (Universal Plus)

If your call is regarding an early help query (Level 2), you will be signposted to our LCC webpage which details a list of local community resources. If you require specific advice, a member of our support hub will contact you within 48 hours.

Calls from members of the Public

The advice line for members of the public operates on the same call back system, our customer access advisors will request contact details, and a summary of the concerns/ reason for the call. This information will be passed to a member of staff within the MASH who will provide a response.

Calls for open cases to CSC

Our Customer Access Advisors will continue to take calls for families open to Children's Social Care. These calls will be re-directed to the relevant teams and workers.

Calls for cases open CFW

Our Customer Access Advisors will continue to take calls for families open to children and family's wellbeing service (CFW). These calls will be re-directed to the relevant teams and workers. If you are calling to raise a section 47 concern on a case open to CFW, your call back request will be assigned to a social worker in the MASH

