

Action Plan Update

Please provide an update in relation to the actions listed below. We have removed actions from your action plan where an update is not required at this time. We may seek an update to all actions at a later date.

The non-compliances and corresponding actions have been numbered and some re-ordered for ease of reference

Provider's response to Inspection Report No:	4416_CPW_DSC_17
Name of Service Area:	Dublin South Central, Child Protection and Welfare Service
Date of inspection:	17, 18, 19 and 20 th September 2018
Action action plan	December 4 th 2018.
Date of response:	

These requirements set out the actions that should be taken to meet the *National Standards for the Protection and Welfare of Children*

Theme 2: Safe and Effective Services

Standard 2.2

Non-Compliant Major

The provider is failing to meet the National Standards in the following respect:

1. Screening and preliminary enquiries process was not robust and was not completed in line with the Child and Family Agency's standard business processes.
2. The oversight of screening processes was poor and ineffective at ensuring consistency and quality.
3. The application of thresholds was not routinely recorded.

Action required:

Under **Standard 2.2** you are required to ensure that:

All concerns in relation to children are screened and directed to the appropriate service.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

- 1.1 Three additional network coordinator posts assigned to PPFS were submitted to COO office during Q4 2018 by the Service Director.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

- 1.2 The restructuring of the Intake pillar with separate Intake teams will allow greater attention to screening of preliminary enquiries. The review of the remaining open cases in the Lord Edward street Child protection teams are currently taking place.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

- 2.1 The application of thresholds using the SOS screening tool being implemented for all new referrals received since Sept 30th 2018 is being implemented and also retrospectively for all open cases in child protection. Oversight by the PSW for intake of referrals through sample monthly audits will take place with the Team leader for QA who will audit sample of completed screening tools. In addition an

SOS quarterly case prioritization workshop will review all screened referrals over the preceding 3 months to ensure compliance with thresholds and implementation of the SOS screening tool.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale:

2.2 Quality assurance (QA) of screened cases and completed IRs is part of this project review and is subject to ongoing monthly QA checks of completed IRs.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale:

3 Four additional training dates for all social workers on thresholds/interim practice guide and screening are scheduled for December 2018 led by the PSW for child protection and the regional Training development officer (TDO) for SoS implementation.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale:

Standard 2.3

Non-Compliant Major

The provider is failing to meet the National Standards in the following respect:

1. Some children did not receive timely interventions.
2. Safety planning was not embedded in practice and action taken to support families and protect children through good quality safety planning was not consistent.
3. The service did not respond appropriately in all cases where multiple reports of concerns for children who were already known to the service were received.

Action required:

Under **Standard 2.3** you are required to ensure that:

Timely and effective actions are taken to protect children.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

- 1.1 A new dedicated principal social work post for intake and two dedicated intake teams (for Bridge House and Lord Edward Street) with two additional senior practitioner posts will ensure that all referrals are screened robustly, and that where risk is identified that immediate responses are put in place. The restructuring of the intake/child protection teams will allow for a clear daily duty rota to be put in place for immediate responses to children and families where screening indicates immediate concerns or assessments are required.
- 1.2 The principal social worker, as part of the project review of all open cases (including allocated and unallocated case lists), is ensuring that a more balanced case load is in place as per the Agency's case load management tool. This will ensure that social workers can respond immediately to any identified risks. The restructuring of the child protection/intake pillars and robust front door screening will allow social workers to respond on their reduced allocated cases to ensure that timely interventions are being provided to families where case prioritization deems them of high priority. Cases which are deemed to be of low/medium priority will be managed by the three child protection team leaders on a duty rota system and will be reviewed by the team leaders on a monthly basis. All high priority cases will be allocated with a restructured duty system of all other cases managed by team leaders and PSW's, ensuring regular review.
- 1.3 The new intake principal social worker will review the operation and frequency of R.E.D (Review, Evaluate, Direct) team meetings in the area to ensure that funded agencies are available to take more frequent child welfare referrals and provide interventions for families which are not deemed to be child protection concerns.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

- 2.1 Safety planning training is being provided to all teams during quarter one of 2019 under SoS practice model. In the interim, the area has devised its own safety planning template using SoS to ensure that all support networks involved with families are identified and are part of robust safety planning in the area.
- 2.2 The PSWs for intake and child protection will robustly and routinely review safety planning for children and families. Team leaders will also use supervision process to ensure that safety plans are robust. Training is being provided during December 2018 to all social workers within the intake and child protection pillars.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

- 3 The intake pillar will routinely review patterns of referrals on each case using the National Child Care Information System (NCCIS) and ensure that where multiple referrals have been received that an alert system is activated using the SoS screening tool to robustly review these cases. SoS case prioritization workshops will be held every quarter to review all screened referrals into the intake/child protection pillar over the previous three months.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

Standard 2.4

Non-Compliant Major

The provider is failing to meet the National Standards in the following respect:

1. Children and families who were placed on a waitlist for preliminary enquiries, initial assessment, further assessment and those awaiting access to external services or PPFS did not receive a service in a timely manner.
2. The local protocol for managing cases awaiting a service was not being implemented and the systems in place to monitor waitlists were ineffective.
3. Reviews of referrals categorised as welfare cases did not appropriately consider cumulative risks in all cases.
4. There was no plan in place to systematically reduce waitlists in the service.
5. Some cases were closed inappropriately.

Action required:

Under **Standard 2.4** you are required to ensure that:

Children and families have timely access to child protection and welfare services that support the family and protect the child.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

1. Cases awaiting referral to PPFS following completion of preliminary enquiry will be prioritized by PPFS allocation using the R.E.D team meetings.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

- 2.1 A revised protocol for managing cases on a waiting list for preliminary enquiries, initial assessments and further assessment will be implemented in the area following completion of the project currently taking place which is reviewing all open cases within the intake and child protection pillars, including both allocated and unallocated cases. This review will be completed by January 2019. Following this review, all open cases within the area will have been screened using the SoS prioritization tool and follow up actions determined. The cases awaiting allocation for preliminary enquiry are being prioritized and any backlogs will be cleared by the end of Q4 2018. A revised protocol based on the above screening of cases awaiting allocation for IAs/FAs will be in place in the area by January 2019.
- 2.2 The revised area protocol for managing cases on a waiting list will include details on the frequency and process for review, including how cases will be escalated for PSW's attention. Waiting lists will be monitored continually by intake and child protection team leaders with oversight by the principal social workers. A team leader post for quality assurance in the area will be filled in January 2019 and this person will have

responsibility for reporting directly to the PSW for intake and child protection to ensure that cases on waiting lists are also screened for quality assurance on a regular and ongoing basis.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

2.3 Monthly quality assurance reports will be provided to the PSW's and Area Manager by the quality assurance team leader. The purpose of these monthly reports will include a sample audit of completed screenings of referrals and also of completed Intake records, initial assessments and closed cases.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

3. Completed intake records which refer to PPFS will have the assistance a PPFS social worker who will ensure/quality assure that cumulative risks have been considered as part of the recommendations for diversion to child welfare interventions. The PSW for intake & team leaders will ensure that cumulative referrals/risks have been considered prior to signing off these intake assessments.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

4.1 The principal social worker for child protection is currently reviewing overall case allocations to ensure that optimum allocations across all child protection teams is taking place to reduce overall waiting lists.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale:

4.2 A briefing document on overall numbers of social workers and administration staff within the area, details regarding increased referrals to the area and numbers of children in care, in addition to socioeconomic deprivation levels using research based upon the 2016 census is being prepared for the service director and national office by the area manager. The purpose of this briefing document to the Service Director is to ensure that the area has sufficient social work and administration resources based on improved data collation systems, such as NCCIS, which indicate a trend of increased referrals into the area.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

5.1 A standard operating procedure (SOP) is in place for all referrals in the area. This includes quality assurance review of all cases deemed appropriate for closure by the local area quality assurance team leader. This SOP is being reviewed by the area in light of the re-structuring of intake/ child protection pillars. Learning from these audits will be provided to the team leaders and teams within both pillars. This will also be incorporated into the revised SOP.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

5.2 Training on case closures will be provided to all team leaders within the intake and child protection pillars during Q1 2019 by the principal social workers.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

Standard 2.5

Non-Compliant Major

The provider is failing to meet the National Standards in the following respect:

1. The quality of some initial and further assessments was inconsistent and there were delays in the commencement and completion of assessments. Child protection concerns were not address in line with Children First.
2. Some children were not seen as part of initial and further assessments.
3. Not all allegations of suspected abuse were notified to An Garda Síochána.

Action required:

Under **Standard 2.5** you are required to ensure that:

All reports of child protection concerns are assessed in line with Children First (2011) and best available evidence.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

- 1.1 The quality of initial and further assessments will be reviewed by the principal social worker for child protection with the child protection team leaders in respect of their quality assurance processes prior to signing off of these assessments. The PSW's for intake/child protection and service improvement will have oversight of the quality assurance audit process in the area and will receive monthly audit reports from the quality assurance team leader. The monthly reports from the quality assurance team leader will audit a sample of completed intake records, initial assessments, further assessments and closed files to ensure that the quality of assessments is of a good standard. Feedback to the team leaders and teams at training workshops will be provided in respect of improving the overall quality of assessments in the area. Further training will be provided to all intake and child protection team members in respect of quality assurance processes for when they are completing initial assessments and further assessments in line with children first guidelines.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

- 1.2 Further training will be provided to all intake and child protection team members in respect of quality assurance processes for when they are completing initial assessments and further assessments in line with children first guidelines.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

2. The dedicated quality assurance team leader post in the area will review and complete audits of completed initial and further assessments as part of this role and provide feedback to the principal social worker on completed audits on a quarterly basis. This feedback will also be provided to the child protection teams.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

3.1 The project review being led by the PSW for child protection of all open cases within the intake/child protection pillars will ensure that all notifications of suspected abuse to An Garda Síochána have been made. Ongoing monthly sample audit reports of intake/child protection case files by the QA TL will ensure compliance with this action.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

3.2 The newly appointed principal social worker for child protection will continue to chair the Garda child abuse review meetings to have continued robust oversight of all notifications to/from the Gardaí. The PSW will have oversight of the area Garda notification meetings.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

Standard 2.10

Non-Compliant Major

The provider is failing to meet the National Standards in the following respect:

1. Governance arrangements were not robust.
2. National frameworks, policies and processes were not consistently implemented.
3. Monitoring systems such as supervision, caseload management systems were not robust
4. The national guidance on caseload management was not implemented across the area.
5. Deficits identified in audits carried out in the area were not acted upon in a timely manner.
6. The areas service improvement plan had not been effectively implemented within defined timeframes.
7. Information governance was inadequate, NCCIS was not fully implemented.

Action required:

Under **Standard 2.10** you are required to ensure that:

Child protection and welfare case planning is managed and monitored to improve practice and outcomes for children.

Please state the actions you have taken or are planning to take:

- 1.1 A dedicated quality assurance team leader will also provide audits/reviews of completed assessments and closed cases as well as provide regular reports to the principal social workers for both intake and child protection.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

- 1.2 The Service director has asked the National project management office to co-ordinate a project response called 'project vision' for all action plans and service improvement plans in the area. This will be lead out by the PSW for service improvement in the area and will form the basis of the oversight progress meetings chaired by the Service Director.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

2 The quality assurance lead for the area will ensure that all national policies, processes and frameworks are presented to large team meetings and training provided to all social work teams on same.

Team leaders and principal social workers will ensure that all teams are aware of same.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

3& 4 A supervision audit is taking place during early 2019. Caseload management training is being provided to all staff during Q4 2018 and will continue into 2019. The purpose of these is to ensure that effective and regular supervision meetings are in place in the area and that all social workers receive same.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

5.The area audits which have identified deficits, as well as the signs of safety screening review of all open cases within the intake/child protection pillar are being tracked on a database to ensure tracking of decisions and actions are being made.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

6. The area's service improvement and HIQA action plans are being formulated into a project management plan for the area. The regional service director will have oversight of tracking implementation of this plan at the oversight meetings she is chairing.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

7. The area has a dedicated team leader post for NCCIS due be filled in Q4 2018. An admin project team for NCCIS is being created in the area. The area also has a full time data information/NCCIS officer. The TL posts will ensure auditing / full compliance by the area with NCCIS, cleansing of legacy data and working with regional child care information officer and improving information systems and data within the area.

Insert update here:

Update on timescale

