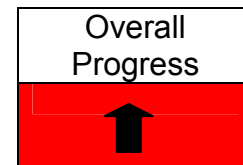


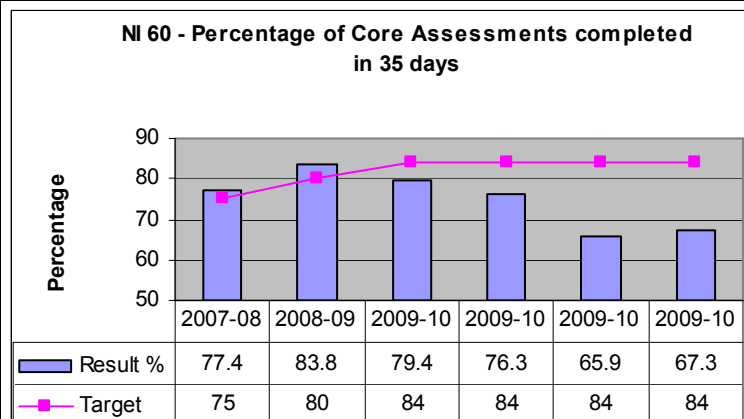
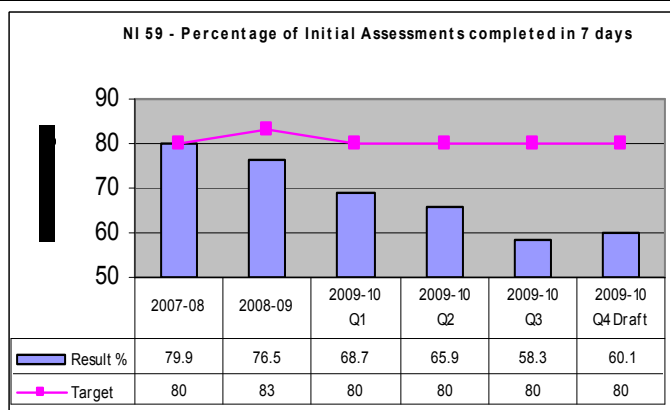
**Improvement Priority – HW-3a/HW-1e/CYPP-9 Improve safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable children through better information, recognition and response to risk and improved assessment and care management**

**Lead Officer – Jackie Wilson**



**Why is this a priority**

If children and young people are to achieve positive outcomes, they need to be safe and secure. With our partners it is important that we can identify when a child or young person is vulnerable, take decisive and timely action to make sure children are safe and to plan with them for a more secure future. If this 'preventative approach' doesn't work there are concerns that children or young people may be at risk of, or suffering, significant harm.



**Overall Progress to date and outcomes achieved**

**Overall Summary.**

Following the inspection of safeguarding and looked after children in Q3, and the subsequent receipt of the Improvement Notice, an even greater emphasis on strengthening safeguarding is in place.

The Improvement Plan provides the management framework in response to the inspection report and the Improvement Notice; it identifies all the areas where improvement is required and provides the tracking and monitoring framework. In addition to this the Interim Director of Children's Services is receiving weekly update reports.

The Improvement Notice placed specific targets on the performance of NI 59 and NI 60; the DCSF recognised that there was a significant historical backlog of overdue assessments which needed addressing urgently; and that the increasing incoming work exacerbates the problem.

New, on-line, performance management dashboards were developed which identify progress and workloads, and performance, at a city, area, team and individual basis allowing managers to address this backlog.

Significant progress has been achieved. The backlog has been reduced, timeliness has improved and this has happened in the context of increasing numbers of referrals.

- The outstanding assessment workload was reduced in the period from 10<sup>th</sup> February to the end of March
  - NI 59 Initial Assessments; 689 down to 347
  - NI 60 Core Assessments; 1526 down to 488
- Q4 annual performance results have not met the annual target, a position which reflects poor performance in previous quarters.
  - NI 59 Q3 58.3% Q4 59.7%
  - NI 60 Q3 65.9% Q4 66.9%
- However, March performance shows an encouraging level improvement and suggests that the June targets in the Improvement Plan are achievable.
  - NI 59 March 73%
  - NI 60 March 79.4%

The rate of reduction in outstanding assessments has levelled off; incoming workload and staff capacity is prohibiting further progress; this will be a priority target in Q1 2010/11

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**Achievements since the last report**

- Consolidated the staffing arrangements in the Contact Centre and introduced processes to distinguish between Requests For Service and Referrals; changes to systems have been implemented and training scheduled throughout Q1 2010/11
- Implemented the performance management framework; the on-line management information and the daily tracking of progress with trend analysis is informing social workers, team managers and senior managers such that improved safeguarding is achievable and evidenced. It highlights potential delays and pressure points, allowing early intervention and risk reduction.
- Audit of referrals continues to evidence the improvements in the quality of the assessments being undertaken.
- Data quality, and subsequently management information accuracy, identified as a significant issue and therefore specific training and development has been done to improve in this area, dashboards to help manage data improvements are in design phase.
- Changes to ESCR implemented to improve the contact centre process, assessment process and the validation of data; this gives better controls, simplifies recording and generates better accuracy.
- Induction of the 8 Advanced Practitioners recruited in Q3, joining CYPSC in Q4 and their deployment across the 3 fieldwork localities; this adds capacity and breadth of expertise. Impact assessment will follow in Q1 2010/11.
- Further recruitment has appointed a further 4 advanced practitioners to start in Q1 2010/11, one of these will be allocated to the Contact Centre. The target is for 25.
- 30 preferred candidates for social worker posts were identified and are in the employment checking process and being allocated against vacancies and increases in established posts. Many of these SWs will qualify in the summer and so events and communications from the CO have been done to discourage 'fall-out'.
- 10 fostering and 6 adoption officers have been recruited and will commence employment in Q1 and Q2, recruitment for a further 2 adoption officers and 3 fostering officers, 2 team managers and admin. staff is under way.
- We have started a further recruitment campaign for advanced practitioners, social workers, & fostering and adoption officers as part of a continuous rolling recruitment drive to increase and maintain workforce levels.
- 4 child protection chairs and extra administrative staff have been recruited because we could not meet our targets for initial child protection conferences.
- The analysis of case load and workforce profiles is well under way to inform the deployment of staff across the 3 localities and address the high caseloads currently experienced by all staff.
- The procurement of our organisational development partners who will be driving through the Practice Improvement Programme (PIP), funded mainly through the RIEP and the PCT, will provide expert capacity, starting in Q1 2010/11, to further develop practice standards & high quality processes and training, development and mentoring of social care staff.
- The BPR team have extended the process mapping of assessment through the complete care management life cycle. This will form the basis of the urgently needed enhancements to ICT systems in Q1 2010/11 which, when aligned with the improved practice standards from the PIP, will provide better quality, governance and more efficient services, to the benefit of the children and their families.
- Changes to audit procedures and practices, some of which were identified as shortfalls in the inspection, continue to be rolled out as they are developed. For example information for children and parents on how to complain and access advocacy services has been improved and communicated widely; the quality audit checklists have been extended to, for example, ensure parents receive core assessments and sign acceptance.
- A new performance and quality framework, including comprehensive monitoring and reporting procedures has been developed for residential Homes and, following training, will be fully operational for Q1 2010/11
- Setup of the new Children's Trust Board and the revised Leeds Safeguarding Children Board with the inaugural meetings of both Boards due to take place in April.
- Review group has been established to assess the effectiveness of our preventative services.
- Identified a cohort of 100 children who could potentially exit from the care system with appropriate provision of supporting services; validation against their care plan objectives is underway.
- Reviews of all CLA placed with their parents has commenced and the review of CAFCAS to develop a

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‘fast-track’ agreement and procedures to facilitate the early discharge of care orders.

- Review of all children in independent fostering and residential care to identify where there are potentially better placement options which could be developed, and to inform recruitment strategy.
- Secured additional funding from DCSF to support the improvement activity identified following the inspection. (£690,000)

**Challenges/Risks**

- Improvement Notice sets a very challenging target for 2010/11 and this has impacted on the need to quickly reduce backlogs.
- Incoming work is continuing to grow and, until there is the additional capacity, this is adding to the already high levels of workload.
- There is still an unacceptable number of outstanding assessments; delays in recording completed work is also an issue; new standards for recording need to be embedded and enforced.
- Immediate changes to ESCR required to streamline process and release capacity.
- Further training and development against standards and guidelines need to improve performance and quality.
- Maintaining momentum for improvement in this area (as it is one of many) is a challenge.

<b><u>Council / Partnership Groups</u></b>			
<b><u>Approved by (Accountable Officer)</u></b>	<b>Jackie Wilson</b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b>11 May 2010</b>
<b><u>Approved by (Accountable Director)</u></b>	<b>Eleanor Brazil</b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b>11 May 2010</b>

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**Key actions for the next 6 months**

	<b>Action (Desired Achievements)</b>	<b>Contributory Officer / Partner</b>	<b>Milestone / Actions</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
1.	Refer to the Children's Service Improvement Plan	CO- CYPSC	Various, these are included in the CSIP	Various

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Frequency &amp; Measure</b>	<b>Rise or Fall</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>2008/09 Result</b>	<b>2009/10 Target</b>	<b>Full Year Result</b>	<b>Data Quality</b>
LSP-HW2b(i) a	Number of looked after children (Numerical)	Children and Young People's Social Care (C&YPSC)	Quarterly Numerical	Fall	1281 (2007/08)	1255	1031	1362 - this result is provisional	Some Concerns with data
LSP-HW2b(i) b	Number of children looked after (expressed as a rate per 10,000) excluding unaccompanied asylum seekers	C&YPSC	Quarterly Number	Fall	83.8 per 10,000 (2007/08)	82.1 per 10,000	67.5 per 10,000	89.1 per 10,000 – this result is provisional	Some Concerns with data
NI 59	The proportion of Initial Assessments undertaken within 7 days	C&YPSC	Quarterly %	Rise	79.9% (08-09)	76.5%	80%	59.7% (provisional result)	Some Concerns with data
NI 60	The percentage of core assessments that were completed within 35 working days	C&YPSC	Quarterly %	Rise	77.4% (08-09)	83.3%	84%	66.9% (provisional result)	Some Concerns with data
CYPP P9-3	The proportion of residential homes judged by Ofsted to be good or better	C&YPSC	Quarterly %	Rise	69% (9 out of 13 homes (08/09)	New PI for 09-10	100% (13 homes)	62% (8 out of 13 homes. Inc East M SCC)	No Concerns with data
NI 61	Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption	C&YPSC	Quarterly %	Rise	81.4% (07/08)	87.3%	85%	88.3% (53/60)	No Concerns with data
NI 64	Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more	C&YPSC	Annual %	Fall	7.8% (07/08)	7.6%	7.6%	6.2% (provisional result)	Some concerns in year, data validated at Year End
NI 65	Percentage of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	C&YPSC	Annual %	Bell Shaped	17.5% (07/08)	8.9%	12.5%	10.4% (provisional result)	Some concerns in year, data

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Reference	Title	Owner	Frequency & Measure	Rise or Fall	Baseline	2008/09 Result	2009/10 Target	Full Year Result	Data Quality
									validated at Year End
NI 67	Percentage of child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales	C&YPSC	Annual %	Rise	98.4% (07/08)	99%	100%	99.1% (provisional result)	Some concerns in year, data validated at Year End
NI 68	Percentage of referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment	C&YPSC	Annual %	Bell Shaped	56.8%	54.6%	60%	56.7% (provisional result)	Some concerns in year, data validated at Year End
NI 71	Children who have run away from home/care	Children's Services	Quarterly Number	Rise	Score of 5 out of 15	New PI for 09/10	8 out of 15	6 out of 15	No Concerns with data