

1

Background

Adult V was a vulnerable young adult who had been a Looked After Child. He had a diagnosis of ADHD and DCD/dyspraxia, and displayed some features of foetal alcohol spectrum disorder and autism. There was some knowledge of harmful sexual behaviour towards children. Because not all Adult V's presenting neurodevelopmental behaviours wholly met the diagnostic criteria, he experienced barriers to accessing diagnostic-based services. In adulthood, he was supported under a When I'm Ready (WIR) arrangement. Respite was required from this placement in February 2020. In May 2020, Child A, who had been placed in the same respite placement with Adult V, disclosed sexual abuse perpetrated by the young adult.



CWMPAS 2 2020

Extended Adult Practice Review



2

The Hybrid Review

It was felt that there was learning to be obtained from exploring the support agencies provided to both Adult V and Child A, as they were both reliant on the Local Authority for their care and wellbeing. As a result, both an Adult Practice Review and a Child Practice Review have been conducted, under the umbrella of a hybrid model permitting the lived experiences of both Adult V and Child A to be explored in their own right. A Practice Review Report and 7 Minute Briefing have both been produced in respect of Child A, and these are hyperlinked for convenience. Child A's review is titled "CYSUR 4 2020".

7

Improving Systems and Practice

All carers should be furnished with information about the needs of vulnerable adults to allow better insights into their needs.

- There needs to be clear pathways and processes in place to ensure that young people subject to the pathway planning process with complex needs, without a medical diagnosis, are assessed on a needs-led basis which supports effective transition planning into adult services.
- Local Authority to give assurances that practitioners are fully consulted and central in decision making for respite provision and matching - and policies are being followed.
- Clarify if the regional Resolution of Professional Differences protocol can be used for internal disputes.

3

Key Themes: Placement Shortage/Complex Needs

Significant challenges were highlighted via this review in respect of shortage of foster and respite placements. Within a context of increasing complexity of need being seen in respect of children and young adults, this creates a complex challenge in terms of identifying suitable, needs-led placements for children and young adults.

Within this review, it was considered that respite provision for an adult under When I'm Ready should not have been arranged within a foster placement. Additionally, it was considered that had there not been a shortage of experienced foster carers, Child A and their sibling may not have needed respite care at that point in time.

6

Improving Systems and Practice

Reinforce to staff the importance of escalating concerns and the whistleblowing process when there are concerns in relation to risk and safeguarding.

- Clarify the decision-making process for deciding respite care when there are conflicting needs of young adults and carers.
- Ensure practitioners involved in arranging respite care for young adults in WIR and foster placements fully understand risk management and safeguarding to ensure matching decisions are made with full knowledge of their histories.
- Clinicians should follow up promptly when they do not have access to a complete medical history.
- Health professionals should document the time and dates when health assessments are undertaken.

5

Identified Good Practice

- The WIR carer felt well supported by the fostering service
- Excellent practice and communication ensured Adult V had developmental opportunities within the scope of his vulnerability
- The personal adviser worked closely with Adult V, his WIR carer and college to provide consistent and valuable support, often exceeding expectations
- The WIR carer supported Adult V in pursuing his skills in music
- The college employed their wellbeing support effectively
- Primary care met Adult V's health needs and responded to concerns, as well as supporting his independence skills
- The police worked well with partner agencies, Adult V and Child A to ensure a conviction was given

4

Key Themes: Matching and Placement Decisions

The social workers supporting Adult V and Child A, as well as foster carers, had been concerned about the risks present in relation to the agreed placement and linked to Adult V's history of harmful sexual behaviour. While policies and procedures were in place to facilitate risk-informed matching, these policies were not followed in respect of Adult V and Child A.

Informal processes developed within the fostering service were not compliant with policy, and inappropriate pressure was applied to respite carers to agree a placement in respect of which they had concerns. Furthermore, insufficient levels of information about children's needs and associated risk was shared.