

Bath & North East Somerset Community Safety & Safeguarding Partnership and South Gloucestershire Children's Partnership
Child Safeguarding Practice Review
Baby M
 April 2023

Baby M

The reason for this Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) is to consider Baby M, a three-month-old baby who experienced serious and significant injuries, thought likely to be non-accidental.

The review analysed a ten month time frame from the booking in appointment with midwifery services to the date of the injuries occurring.

Baby M's mother moved between two geographical areas during this time frame and both partnerships worked together to undertake the review.

Following birth, Baby M was discharged with both parents to the paternal family home in Bath & North East Somerset.

Baby M's mother returned to South Gloucestershire to live shortly before the injuries occurred and Baby M remained in the paternal family home.

Theme: Identifying and Responding to the vulnerability of babies

- Increasing awareness of the ICON programme to all practitioners including those outside of health providers
- Ensure physical health needs for a baby are balanced with understanding of wider factors, including parental needs, past trauma to gain a comprehensive picture



The two Partnerships commissioned Sarah Holtam, an independent reviewer to lead this CSPR



Professionals from all of the involved agencies took part in the review



Members of the family also contributed their views to the CSPR

Recommendations

There are four main recommendations each with a series of actions relating to each theme.

1. Health Recording Systems include a holistic assessment of a child's needs which includes contextual maternal and paternal family factors
2. The ICON Programme & increasing awareness of Non Accidental Injury in Babies
3. Effective Transfer of Information between areas and services
4. Safeguarding Supervision arrangements for community health professionals which ensures there is a safe space for critical thinking in practice, promotes professional curiosity, and is a trauma informed approach to the family's needs when working with pre and post birth situations

Theme: Keeping a focus on the child when they move between areas

- It was not clear where Baby M lived, agencies were reliant on what and when parents told them
- There wasn't enough curiosity about where Baby M was
- Information sharing was too variable between areas and health services and with housing providers. More collaboration was needed
- Practitioners should ensure housing providers are kept in the loop with key information and included in multi agency discussions

Theme: Critical thinking in Practice

'On the face of things' all appeared well for Baby M

- It is vital to understand the narrative of a baby's lived experience. What is the day in the life of a child like?
- Inquisitive, open minded practice ensures a holistic view of day to day life
- Lack of multi agency information sharing and decision making contributed to Baby M remaining at a universal support level

Records need to be clear, accurate and specific so that when information is shared it is understood correctly

You can read the full CSPR Baby M by clicking here

ICON Resources are available by clicking here

Theme: Recording systems

- Different pieces of information were seen in isolation, language and behaviours of parents and information about the past were not joined together
- Record keeping was poor at times with limited details
- Language used to describe situations was factually incorrect at times and did not distinguish fact from opinion or was not specific enough to describe what was being seen.

Understanding Wider Context in a Family

- One of Baby M's parents was a care leaver and the impact of this wasn't explored
- Family dynamics were not explored, including coercion and control that had been witnessed
- Housing vulnerabilities were not considered