



Local Safeguarding
Children Partnership

Hammersmith & Fulham

Escalation Policy

Hammersmith and Fulham LSCP: Escalation and resolving professional differences policy

Date: May 2024 / Date of Review: May 2025

Introduction:

In order to safeguard children and young people it is vital that there is close collaboration by all partner agencies working with the child and their family. However, there may be occasions where agencies working with children and families in Hammersmith and Fulham disagree on how best to keep children safe and promote their welfare.

Disagreements may be about:

- decisions on levels of need and whether a child, unborn baby or family have met the threshold for a service or intervention;
- decisions on how the case should be conducted (ie: CIN or CP) or if a case should be stepped up to more robust intervention or closed;
- the roles and responsibilities of involved agencies;
- the actions or lack of action by any agency in progressing the child's plan;
- the level or quality of communication between agencies.

Professionals must not ignore any concerns they may have that the practice, action or lack of action of a partner agency may adversely impact on the safety and welfare of a child; all professionals have a duty to take action under this policy in order to ensure children are kept safe. Where concerns about the progress of a case are linked to parental non-engagement or non-compliance in implementing the child's plan, this must be raised in accordance with the escalation policy.

Purpose and scope of policy:

Children's safety can only be assured and their welfare promoted where professionals work jointly, sharing responsibility for case management and decision making.

To ensure safe practice in multi-agency working, there must be a culture of constructive challenge and a mechanism that allows agencies to raise concerns about practice so that they feel confident that their concerns will be taken seriously and appropriately addressed. This escalation policy sets out what actions should be taken by agencies where there are professional differences around how to keep children (including unborn children) safe. It aims to ensure that the focus is kept on children's safety by providing a formal framework for the swift and satisfactory resolution of differences of opinion between members of a child's professional network. It covers all members of the children's workforce in Hammersmith and Fulham (Voluntary and Statutory) including the police who may be working with children (including unborns) who are receiving an early help, child in need, child protection or looked after child service by the Local Authority, or who it is thought meet the threshold for a service.

Principles:

All children's safety (including unborn children) and welfare should be the key focus at all times and a dispute between agencies should never leave a child unprotected.

- Differences of opinion should be resolved at the earliest stage possible with escalation to the next stage only taking place where a satisfactory resolution cannot be found.
- Disputes should be resolved in an open and timely manner with all relevant issues identified for resolution.

- At each stage, resolution of issues should be reached within 1 working week, at a maximum, but if it is thought that a child may be at increased risk, escalation to the next stage should take place within 24 hours.
- Where an issue arising from the dispute involves an operational issue between two or more agencies, for example the process of referring a case from one service to another, these agencies must be involved in finding a solution to the dispute.
- Where a dispute identifies an issue arising from strategic or policy issues, for example around the interpretation of statutory guidance, the matter should be referred to the LSCP Business Manager for consideration by the relevant Subgroup.
- Where a dispute involves a complaint about the behaviour or professional conduct of a worker, this should initially be reported to their manager or supervisor and dealt with under the LADO procedures.

Procedures for dispute resolution

This process should be followed only where there is no risk of immediate harm to a child with each step taking no longer than 1 working week before being escalated to the next stage if no resolution can be found.

If a child is thought to be at imminent risk of harm, the matter should be referred immediately to your manager and the Initial Contact and Advice Team (ICAT) on 0208-753-6600 to decide on any action needed to protect them while the dispute is being resolved. Only then should the steps set out here be followed or in an emergency, call the police by ringing 999.

Whenever this process is begun, actions taken at each stage and the outcome should be recorded in the case notes section of the child's record held by the agencies involved. Case notes should clearly state:

- the date of and form of communication
- who was involved
- what was discussed
- what was the outcome, including any further escalation under this policy

Stage 1: discussion between front line workers
Whenever a dispute arises, the professionals directly involved should discuss the matter in the first instance. Often, differences in professional opinion can be based on lack of communication or a misunderstanding of agency policy and procedures and can consequently be resolved quickly. If the matter cannot be resolved at this stage, the parties should identify what the issues are and agree to move to the next step of the escalation process.
Stage 2: discussion between frontline managers
The professionals involved in the dispute should contact their manager to consider the issues raised, what outcome they would like to achieve and how differences can be resolved. The front line managers should then contact each other to try to negotiate a settlement to the dispute or if this is not possible, clarify the issues before moving on to the next step.
Stage 3: discussion between named/designated safeguarding leads/operational managers
Stage 3 disputes should be passed to the relevant named safeguarding lead officer for the agencies involved. These named officers should discuss the issues identified and try to find a solution that is child focussed and ensures their safety and welfare. If this is not possible, the matter should be escalated to the next stage. Please contact cat.miller2@lbhf.gov.uk for named officer contact details.
Stage 4: referral to a named senior manager/ Director
Stage 4 disputes should be referred to named senior managers within the relevant agencies to negotiate a resolution to the dispute. Please contact cat.miller2@lbhf.gov.uk for named officer contact details.
*For Health Professionals:

For all agencies and partners with issues that concern a health provider, please alert the Designated Safeguarding Nurse for Safeguarding Children (Fola Agboola) o.agboola@nhs.net .

For Primary care escalations, please include the Named GP for Safeguarding Children, Amy Crofts and the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children.

This includes:

- when a health provider named professional has concerns with other agencies that they have attempted to resolve without progress.
- Where patterns of the same issues are being flagged either to health or from health.

Escalation Contacts: Contact details for escalation of concerns and/or challenges		
Agency	Role	Contact details
Schools	Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	Lara Thompson Lara.Thompson@lbhf.gov.uk
SEND & LDD	Head of SEND	Phil.Tomsett@lbhf.gov.uk
CYPS	Head of Safeguarding, SRQA, H&F Children's Services	Anna.carpenter@lbhf.gov.uk
Youth Justice Service	Head of Youth Justice	Alison.Sabaroche@lbhf.gov.uk
Adult Social Care	Adult Social Care	Julie Puddephat AD for safeguarding and performance Julie.Puddephatt@lbhf.gov.uk
Early Years Service	Head of Family Hubs	Phil.Tomsett@lbhf.gov.uk
Family Support (Early Help Service)	Team Managers	Giorgia.Trevisanello@lbhf.gov.uk Emma.Collison@lbhf.gov.uk Charmaine.campbell@lbhf.gov.uk
H&F Housing	Assistant Director Housing Management	Ian Cartmell: Strategic Lead in Housing Management. Ian.Cartmell@lbhf.gov.uk Neehara Wijeyesekera : Assistant Director of Housing Management Neehara.Wijeyesekera@lbhf.gov.uk

NW London ICB	Designated Nurse: Safeguarding Children	Fola Agboola o.agboola@nhs.net
	Named GP for Safeguarding Children	Amy Crofts amy.crofts@nhs.net
Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust	Named Midwife for Safeguarding	Anna Robinson anna.robinson9@nhs.net
	Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children	Fiona Menzies fiona.menzies@nhs.net
	Head of Safeguarding/Consultant Nurse for Safeguarding	Nicci Wotton nicci.wotton@nhs.net
Chelsea & Westminster NHS Foundation Trust:	Consultant Midwife for Public Health and Safeguarding	Sarah Green sarah.green9@nhs.net
	Named Nurse for Children's Safeguarding	Faye Mitchinson f.mitchison@nhs.net
Central London Community Healthcare (CLCH)	Associate Director of Safeguarding	Trish Stewart: trishstewart@nhs.net
	Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children (Inner Boroughs) -Hammersmith & Fulham, Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea	Catherine Hunter: catherinehunter4@nhs.net
	Locality lead for 0-19 service in H&F	Carol Cork: carol.cork@nhs.net
West London NHS Trust (WLNT)	WLNT: CAMHS Alliance	CAMHS Alliance Email: wlm-tr.camhsalliance@nhs.net Tel: 0800 328 44 Choose Option 2
	WLNT: Hammersmith & Fulham CAMHS	Hammersmith & Fulham CAMHS Tel: 020 8354 8160 Email: wlm-tr.hfcamhs@nhs.net
	WLNT: Forensic CAMHS	Forensic CAMHS Tel: 0208 354 8002 Email: wlm-tr.nwlfcamhs@nhs.net

	WLNT: Single Point of Access	There is a Single Point of Access (SPA), also known as the 24/7 Helpline, is a telephone based service which manages all adult mental health referrals as well as providing telephone support to patients and carers. wlm-tr.wlmhtSPA@nhs.net Tel: 0800 328 4444
	WLNT: Mental Health Unit, (Avonmore Ward, Ravenscourt Ward, Lillie Ward, Apollo Ward & Askew PICU)	Ravenscourt.WardStaff@westlondon.nhs.uk Meridian.WardStaff@westlondon.nhs.uk Avonmore.WardStaff@westlondon.nhs.uk LillieWard.TeamStaff@westlondon.nhs.uk Tel: 0207 386 1127 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ravenscourt: 020 7386 1151 / 1153 / 1154 • Meridian: 020 7386 1128, 1129 • Avonmore: 020 7386 1181 / 1182 • Lillie: 020 7386 1164 / 1165
	WLNT: Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team (CATT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Teams CATT (Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team) Duty.H&FCatt@westlondon.nhs.uk Tel: 020 8483 1443
	WLNT: Cognitive Impairment and Dementia Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive Impairment and Dementia Service (CIDs) Wlm-tr.hafcids@nhs.net Tel: 020 8483 1800
	WLNT: Perinatal mental health & Maternity Trauma and Loss Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perinatal mental health 0800 328 4444 • wlm-tr.PNMHEHHF@nhs.net
	WLNT: Mental health integrated network teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Integrated Network Teams (MINT) 0800 328 4444 • South: HFSouthMINT@westlondon.nhs.uk • North: HFSouthMINT@westlondon.nhs.uk • Central: HFCentralMINT@westlondon.nhs.uk Tel: 0800 328 4444 / South: 0207 386 1245 / North: 0208 483 1750 / Central: 0207 386 1336
	WLNT: Liaison psychiatry service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaison psychiatry service 0800 328 4444 wlm-tr.HammersmithLiaisonPsychiatry@nhs.net ichc-tr.handpsychliaison@nhs.net
	WLNT: Early Intervention Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Intervention Service 020 8483 1445 HFEIP@Westlondon.nhs.uk
	WLNT: • NHS Taking Therapies (TT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS Taking Therapies (TT) (Previously know as IAPT) Hounslow 0800 328 444 wlm-tr.backontrack@nhs.net
	WLNT: Named Nurse Safeguarding Children and Young People	1. Initial Escalation – West London Trust Safeguarding Team Email: wlm-tr.safeguardingchildren@nhs.net

		2. Extra Escalation – Named Nurse Safeguarding Children and Young People Email: thomaswebster@nhs.net
Police	Detective Inspector Public Protection Hub Central West BCU	DI Fiona Van Kampen; Fiona.VanKampen@met.police.uk
Probation	Senior Probation Officer	Saeeda Khan saeeda.khan@justice.gov.uk