



Cheshire West and Chester  
Safeguarding Children  
Partnership

Covid-19 Newsletter 3:  
Safeguarding Children  
Partnership  
9.4.2020

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As week 3 draws to a close and many of us prepare for what will be a very different Easter bank holiday, we do hope it provides an opportunity for relaxation and time well spent with family and friends, albeit virtually or by phone. We also want to recognise those staff who will continue to work tirelessly during this period to ensure that essential services are maintained. As ever we thank you for your continued dedication to our vulnerable children and families.

All of the information in this Newsletter and previous editions can be accessed on our website at <https://www.cheshirewestscp.co.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/>.

## Multi-Agency Safeguarding Practice Standards for the workforce

There have been no changes to the Practice Standards this week, we just wanted to take the opportunity to remind all services of the revised requirements to multi-agency practices during this period. If you haven't done so already, please take the time to reference the document.



Covid-19  
Multi-Agency Practice

## Key messages from the Partnership

Safeguarding Leads from a wide range of statutory and commissioned services have met weekly since lockdown began. They have been actively involved in the development of local guidance and the Practice Standards referred to above. The group continue to meet to test the impact of the practice standards for Children and Families so that we are able to respond swiftly to any emerging areas of concerns. This week we have identified some opportunities for learning that we wanted to share:

- **Importance of information sharing at Child Protection Conferences** – attendance by children and parents at any multi-agency meeting can be a cause of anxiety and this is more acutely felt in the current circumstances when many professionals are joining the meetings virtually. It is therefore important that all services try to speak to parents in advance of these meetings and prepare them as best they can by being

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open about the information that is going to be shared. It is also vital that all key information is shared during the conference when parents are present to contribute to the conversation, and not directly to the Child Protection Conferences Chairs following meetings.

- **Importance of professionals taking the time to talk and plan actions together** – the Covid-19 Multi-Agency Practice Standards were developed in recognition that as the situation unfolds single agency responses must also adapt and this can lead to misunderstandings. If a partner agency's response is not what you expected do explore the reasons why before escalating. We've seen some examples recently that could have been avoided if partners had followed the advice in the Practice Standards that 'at every stage of safeguarding, all agencies need to be involved in the assessment of the situation, the sharing of information, developing a plan on how to respond and then putting that into action'. However well intentioned, when we ACT alone, we often create additional challenges for one another and may not improve the outcomes for children and families as effectively.

## Support for victims of domestic abuse

Some children and adults could be facing increased risks as we are all asked to stay at home. Social distancing and self-isolation could be used as a tool of coercive and controlling behaviour by people with abusing behaviours to shut down routes to safety and support.

**If you or someone you know is in immediate danger call 999.**

### Advice and support

Links to local support services can be accessed here [Domestic Abuse Intervention and Prevention Service](#), [Open the Door](#), [Be Safe](#), [Live Well Cheshire West](#). More information around local and national support and advice available can be found on the [domestic abuse webpages](#), including specific pages relating to [professionals supporting someone with domestic abuse concerns](#).

The government have also issued advice and guidance which includes a range of National support services including for male victims

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-and-domestic-abuse/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-victims-of-domestic-abuse>

## Wellbeing

Local NHS Trust, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership (CWP), has launched a new mental health helpline for residents of Cheshire West, Cheshire East and Wirral. Open 24 hours a day, seven-days a week, it is open to people of all ages including children and young people who need urgent mental health support. Find out more about the service and how they can be contacted in this press release



CWP Mental Health  
Phone Line Goes Live

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Public Health England (PHE) have also published advice for parents and carers on looking after the mental health and wellbeing of children or young people during the coronavirus outbreak. The guidance covers: helping children and young people cope with stress; how children and young people of different ages may react; children and young people who are accessing mental health services; children and young people with learning disabilities; autistic children and young people; children and young people who care for others; and bullying. The guidance will be updated in line with the changing situation

- [Guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak \(Public Health England\)](#)

## Other Useful Information

**Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASASC) Update** - All the team are now home working and are offering telephone/online support to all of their existing service users. All service users can contact their allocated worker in the normal way. For any new referrals please use the simple online referral form on their website, call 0330 363 0063 or email [support@rapecentre.org.uk](mailto:support@rapecentre.org.uk)

- Website contact us page-<https://www.rapecentre.org.uk/contact.php>
- Professional referral- <https://www.dpmscloud.com/external/referralformorgcheshirerc>
- Self referral-<https://www.dpmscloud.com/external/referralformselfcheshirerc>

**Coronavirus: advice and support for parents and carers** - The NSPCC has created an online Hub providing advice and support for parents and carers during the coronavirus outbreak. Content includes: information on keeping children safe from abuse; tips and advice to help parents working from home; and ways to talk to a child who is anxious or worried about coronavirus.

- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) advice and support for parents and carers](#)

**Coronavirus and Social Care** - The Department of Health & Social Care have published guidance setting out provisions to change social care assessments created under the Coronavirus Act 2020. The Department for Education (DfE) has also published guidance for children's social care to help support and protect vulnerable children in England.

- [Care Act easements: guidance for local authorities](#)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance for children's social care services](#)

**NHS and social care staff: check if a COVID-19 patient has an attorney or deputy** - The Office of the Public Guardian holds a register of everyone who has a lasting or enduring power of attorney, or who has a deputy acting for them. This can be searched to find the contact details of those involved. Since the coronavirus outbreak, there have been many urgent requests to search the database for people who have lost mental capacity. Find out more at

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-staff-searching-our-registers-of-attorneys-and-deputies>

**Stay safe this weekend**

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**From your Safeguarding Children Partnership Team**