

## **MASH and Domestic Abuse multi- agency audit- Learning Outcomes**

The audit focussed on Enfield's MASH response to cases referred where there were concerns regarding domestic abuse.

Auditors from Enfield's Children's Social Care (MASH and the Domestic Abuse Team (DAT) Managers); Community Health (Health Visiting, School Nursing, SALT), the Integrated Care Board (for GPs); the Metropolitan police, and the Enfield Children's Safeguarding Partnership manager met on 10.01.2023 to audit a cohort of cases. Due to time constraints, 14 cases were reviewed on the day.

The initial cohort included 20 cases, 5 of each of the following:

- Referrals NFA-ed by the MASH where the concern was domestic abuse
- Children that subsequently were subject child protection planning (emotional abuse)
- Children subsequently were open to the Domestic Abuse Team
- Alleged incidents of domestic subject to criminal enquiries by the police that were NFA-ed.

Overall – **the grading for this audit is 'Good'** and serves to assure the Partnership that front door arrangements as well as the journey of some cases through to the Domestic Abuse Team are effective in protecting children living with domestic abuse in the borough.

### **Key learning points**

1. Keep emphasising the importance of using history to inform risk assessment and management, especially in cases of suspected domestic abuse
2. Include GP checks as part of all checks in the MASH and communicate regularly with GPs through the family's journey through intervention
3. That work to protect children and adults from domestic abuse is skilled and requires care and reflection
4. That all practitioners in all agencies can take the opportunity to understand the child's lived experience, even in the briefest of interactions
5. Practice could be enhanced by attending police officers asking, where possible, what school the child attends so that contact can be made with the school and the child's needs understood with more depth

6. There was a discussion regarding whether self-referrals by families should be subject to agency checks. The audit team felt that this should happen, especially where the level of risk is deemed to be at Level 3 or 4. At this level of safeguarding, risk assessment should be based on a range of sources of information. A self-referring parent may not be able to represent the child's lived experience whereas a school may be able to through their knowledge of the child and family
7. The learning is for social workers, as well as other practitioners to consider and revisit regularly '*who needs to know?*' with the family they are working with.
8. Practitioners should bear in mind '*the unknown unknowns*' that is sometimes apparent where there are concerns about domestic abuse within a family
9. This has been raised in previous audits however it would be of use to discuss what information could be shared across the system when children are due to be the subject of a CP conference so that agency reports are focussed on risk
10. In all cases of domestic abuse outside of a heterosexual relationship where the woman is the alleged victim, all practitioners should reflect and check their response to domestic abuse cases where a man is the victim.