

Serious Case Review

6 Step Briefing

Child R and Family R

The Background

Child R was 9 weeks old when he sadly died in the family home due to co-sleeping. Child R lived with both parents and his four siblings. There has not been any criminal investigation into this case.

Safeguarding Concerns

Child R was a healthy baby. Tragically, he died whilst sleeping against his mother's chest. Once the review began concerns around neglect became apparent with the four siblings; the two eldest suffered from persistent head lice and on occasions unkempt and hungry.

The Incident

Child R was brought downstairs by Mother around 6am. All children then had breakfast and played in the lounge. Mother took Child R into the lounge and, on this occasion, laid on the sofa with Child R against her chest. She then fell asleep. When she awoke some time later, Child R was not breathing.

The Review

This SCR was undertaken by the NSCB with full co-operation of Northamptonshire agencies. Initially, the review focused on Child R, however, identified concerns expanded the Terms of Reference to include the family and when the Overview Report was presented to the NSCB, it was agreed to change the title of the SCR to Child R and Family R.

The Findings

This family appeared to just be under the radar in terms of intervention of services, however persistent, if intermittent neglect of these children was present. The Neglect Assessment Tool was not used. The School did not escalate issues, preferring to deal with them in-house. Two concealed pregnancies, missed health appointments and lack of immunisations for Child 4. Parents did not engage. Safe sleep messages need to be promoted.

Recommendations

1. All professionals need to be aware of and use the NSCB Practice Guidance on Concealed Pregnancies.
2. All professionals need to be aware of and use the NSCB Neglect Assessment Tool.
3. All professionals to highlight the dangers and potential consequences of co-sleeping to parents.
4. Review safeguarding training provided in schools to ensure appropriate and includes neglect.
5. Awareness is raised amongst Health, Education and Social Care professionals of the damaging effects to children's health and emotional well-being of persistent lice infestation.
6. Ensure robust scrutiny and appropriate action is taken for any child remaining unimmunised for over 12 months.
7. The findings from this review are widely disseminated to remind professionals of the importance to recognise, assess and intervene in cases of neglect.

Good Practice and Evidence as a result of this Review and similar Reviews

Since this Review the NSCB has put Practice Guidance on Concealed Pregnancies on the NSCB website. This guidance is available for all professionals to view. Please click [here](#).

The NSCB Neglect Assessment Tool is available on the NSCB website. Please click [here](#).

The NSCB is currently drafting a NSCB Neglect Toolkit which uses the Graded Care Profile. The Toolkit will be launched during the Nene and Corby Clinical Commissioning Group's Safeguarding Week at their Conference on 26th May 2016.

Following launch the Toolkit will be available on the NSCB website.

On 18th January 2016, the NSCB launched a Safe Sleep Campaign. This was following several unexpected child deaths that all had contributory factors of co-sleeping. A leaflet and poster was developed following a multi agency meeting to ensure we achieved the right message. The leaflet is available on the NSCB website. Please click [here](#).

Feedback from Professionals and Practitioners across the Partnership has been positive in getting the message across through discussions with parents and handing them a leaflet.

With regard to persistent and recurrent head lice, the School Nursing Team is currently developing a leaflet for all professionals to raise awareness and provide information on how to manage infestations.

The leaflet is due to be available by the beginning of May – once available it will be disseminated to all health professionals and through the education weekly bulletin and the Assistant Directors fortnightly bulletin for Safeguarding Children's Services.

The leaflet will also be placed on the NSCB website and promoted through the NSCB newsletter.

Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust has employed a person who specifically monitors children who remain unimmunised for over 12 months and if three appointments are missed, the family is highlighted to the allocated Health Visitor, who will then discuss the issue and achieve an outcome.