

Managing Risk of Serious Harm in Young People

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Serious harm has been defined as 'behaviour of a violent or sexual nature which is life threatening and/or traumatic, and from which recovery, whether physical or psychological, may reasonably be expected to be difficult or impossible' (Risk Management Authority, 2013, p16).

This information sheet aims to share key messages in relation to monitoring, supervising and managing young people who are considered to be of most concern in our communities.

Care and Risk Management (CARM, SG, 2014), published as an appendix to the Framework for Risk Assessment, Management and Evaluation (FRAME), provides a consistent national framework to manage risk to others, by young people aged 12-18 years. In relation to young people under 12, child protection measures may be more appropriate to manage concerns.

Although promoting the adoption of this term nationally, local areas may already have existing terminology for these meetings. The main focus of CARM, however, is to pay cognisance to the care needs of young people involved in harmful behaviours, placing risk management in a GIRFEC context, with outcomes included in a Child's Plan and robust scrutiny of any risk management measures being put in place.

Referral Discussions

Referral discussions should take place with someone within a local authority who has experience of relevant legislation and child protection frameworks; this may be, for example, a youth justice manager, or child protection reviewing officer. Various agencies including police, social work, education and health can refer. Most referrals will relate to violence or harmful sexual behaviour, however referrals for behaviours such as fire raising may also be appropriate.

Referral discussions should include information that allows the coordinator to make a decision on whether a CARM meeting is required, with the expectation that a discussion takes place within 24 hours of an incident and no more than 72 hours after.

Managing Risk

Each CARM meeting should consider the risk classification and agree appropriate actions, which are proportionate to manage risk. FRAME's tiered approach to managing risk is replicated within the CARM guidance:

Aware – Initial CARM meeting with no further meeting required.
Attentive - Chair to arrange review CARM within six months
Active and Alert – Three monthly CARMs with regular core groups

Interface

CARM aims to offer consistency between the child and adult systems. Where someone is approaching 18 and will remain subject to a risk management process (e.g MAPPAs) it is recommended that the CARM chair should attend a first MAPPAs meeting and the MAPPAs coordinator should attend the last CARM meeting, to ensure consistency of approach and that risk management plans remain robust.

References

Children's Hearing (S) Act 2011 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2011/1/contents>

Children's Hearing (S) Act 2011 (Movement Restriction Condition regulations 2013)
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/sdsi/2013/9780111020371>

Risk Management Authority (2013) Standards and Guidelines for Risk Management. Paisley: Risk Management Authority

Scottish Government (2014) Framework for Risk Assessment, Management and Evaluation (FRAME) <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/12/6560>

Scottish Government (2014) Intensive Support and Monitoring System - Guidance on the use of Movement Restriction Conditions (MRC's) in the Children's Hearing System <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2014/10/5782>

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