

4. When an agency has concerns that another agency has not responded in a timely manner, this must be escalated.

What are the practice implications for me?

Professionals must ensure that concerns are brought to the attention of the manager and an explanation provided of the outcome.

A summary of the Serious Case Review is available from:

Judy Jones
PSCB Policy Officer
email: judy.jones@peterborough.gov.uk
telephone: 01733 863745



HIGHLIGHTING LESSONS FROM BABY A SERIOUS CASE REVIEW

SYNOPSIS

Baby A's mother started her labour at home, however baby was in the breech position. Her husband attempted delivery (he pulled baby's legs) before ringing the ambulance service who advised the couple what to do.

The ambulance service delivered the baby, however no pulse was detected. He was revived and ventilated in hospital, however he died the following day. He was the second child of a mother who had been found guilty of grievous bodily harm of her child who 11 years previously had been removed and placed for adoption. She also had poorly controlled diabetes. Father had no previous children but had a mild learning disability and a history of involvement with mental health services

Hospital staff had been concerned for mother and baby and had identified that a referral to Children's Social Care was needed

The consultant physician who wrote to the GP assumed he would make the referral, however he did not. Hospital midwife made a direct referral, however the case was not allocated for a further 4½ months. A strategy discussion with the police outlined plans, however it was a further 2 weeks before the Social Worker saw mother (16 March). Baby was born on 28 March.

There had been no core assessment done and therefore it was difficult to establish the grounds for a care order and for a case conference. At the time of the birth, father had not been seen and mother seen only once.

THE SCR CONCLUDED

“The circumstances of his birth and death could not have been predicted or prevented, however Children's Social Care underestimated the assessment work that was required to properly assess the needs of the unborn baby and the capacity of his mother and father to meet his needs.”

LESSONS LEARNED

These lessons apply to ALL agencies

1. The responsibility for making referrals to Children's Social Care where there is a concern about the safety of a child, lies with the professional who “owns” the concern

What are the practice implications for me?

Never assume that someone else has made a referral even though I brought the concern to a colleague. It is my responsibility to make the referral.

2. It is vital that robust assessments and decision making are undertaken in order to ensure appropriate plans can be put in place.

What are the practice implications for me?

Professionals must ensure that key information is shared and assessments undertaken in a timely manner

3. The complexities of working with parents with learning difficulties and mental health needs cannot be underestimated.

What are the practice implications for me?

Parenting capacity must be rigorously assessed to ensure the needs of the child are considered. Specialist advice should be sought.