



## **Hampshire, Portsmouth, Isle of Wight and Southampton (HIPS) Working Together to Resolve Professional Differences (Child Protection Conferences) Procedure.**

### **1. Disagreement about Need for Child Protection Conference**

The decision whether or not to convene a Child Protection Conference rests with Children's Social Care Services.

However, those professionals and agencies who are most involved with the child and family, and those who have taken part in a Section 47 Enquiry, have the right to request that Children's Social Care Services convene a Child Protection Conference if they have serious concerns that a child's welfare may not otherwise be adequately safeguarded.

Any such request that is supported by a senior manager, or a designated or named Professional, should normally be agreed. Where there remain differences of view over the necessity for a conference for a child/ren after the above escalation processes have been followed, the concerns should be escalated via the line management of Children's Social Care Services and the other agency involved. At this point a meeting should be called to discuss the situation involving all parties. Records of discussions must be maintained by all the agencies involved. The outcome of discussions and agreed actions should also be recorded. If the concern still remains at this stage the professional / agency that disagrees, can appeal via the LSCP.

### **2. Disagreement at Child Protection Conferences**

If a Child Protection Conference is unable to achieve a consensus as to the outcome, the Conference Chair will make a decision and note any differing views. This will include the situation where there is no majority view and where the Conference Chair exercises their decision-making powers. The Chair will take the views of the Conference into account but can overrule the majority view if necessary. The Chair's decision is final.

The agency or individual who disagrees with the Chair's decision must determine whether they wish to further challenge the result. If they believe that the decision reached by the Conference Chair places a child at (further) risk of Significant Harm, it is expected that they will formally raise the matter first with the Conference Chair and if no resolution is reached then with their own line manager and/or Designated or Named Professional in their agency. This will require a discussion between a Children's Social Care senior manager and their equivalent in the relevant agency.



If agreement cannot be reached following discussions between the above managers, the issue must be referred without delay through the line management of the respective agency/agencies structure. At this point a meeting should be called to discuss the situation involving all parties. Records of discussions must be maintained by all the agencies involved. The outcome of discussions and agreed actions should also be recorded. If the concern still remains at this stage the dissenting professional / agency can appeal via the LSCP.

### **3. Disagreement or Concern Regarding the Implementation of the Child Protection Plan**

Concern or disagreement may arise over another professional's decisions, actions or lack of actions in the implementation of the Child Protection Plan, including participation in Core Group meetings. The line managers of the professionals involved should first address these concerns. If agreement cannot be reached following discussions between the above 'first line' managers, the issue must be referred without delay through the line management of each agency. Within Health services, input should be sought from the Named professionals within the organisation who may seek further support from the Designated professionals within NHS Hampshire and Isle of Wight ICB Or Frimley NHS ICB.

Where the issue cannot be resolved, this should be referred back to the Conference Chair for consideration of convening a Review Child Protection Conference to review the plan and the progress against agreed actions

**ENDS**