



ABERDEEN ADULT AND CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEES PRACTITIONER & SUPERVISOR GUIDANCE FOR LEARNING REVIEWS

What is a Learning Review?

A Learning Review is a multi-agency review process, bringing agencies together in a review team in a structured process in order to reflect, increase understanding and identify key learning.

It is a collective endeavour to learn from what has happened in order to improve systems and practice in future and better protect those most vulnerable in our communities.

What is the focus of a Learning Review?

A review will focus on what happened and seek to understand how some assessments and decisions were made regarding an incident/case. It will include:

- understanding how practitioners and line managers saw things at the time;
- understanding what knowledge was drawn on to make sense of the situation; and
- understanding the resources available and the emotional impact of the work.

It will highlight effective practice and share findings so any learning can be implemented in future practice and systems.

What roles are there in a Learning Review?

There are a few key roles required when undertaking a Learning Review and they are the following:

- Review Team;
- Chair of the Review Team;
- Reviewer; and, of course,
- Staff involved in the case.

All relevant partners are represented on the Review Team, which is tasked by the Child or Adult Protection Committee to review the specific circumstances of a case/incident and report back with recommendations, highlighting learning opportunities.

It is also important to note that good practice can also be reviewed to share across the relevant partners.

Practitioner Events

Once the Review Team has met and assessed all the information available from across the services, the reviewers will work together to produce an initial report including recommendations. This is based on them gaining a full understanding and analysis of the case/incident.

However, it is widely acknowledged that in order to really understand what practitioners faced at the relevant time, it is crucial to include practitioners' voices in the review. This is an opportunity to consider the Review Team's findings, reflect on practice and understand the learning.

It is recognised that this may cause a degree of apprehension or anxiety, but it is important that the events are seen as safe spaces, with an atmosphere of trust and safety created. Consequently, they are sensitively facilitated. To ensure further support, line managers are also expected to attend.

Practitioner events are not about individual culpability; their focus is learning.

The event will be led by one/two identified members of the Review Team. Practitioners will be asked beforehand to revisit their involvement, to think about any assessments and decisions they made, and to reflect on their actions and interactions with other professionals and services. This is done with a view to practitioners themselves identifying areas of effective practice and areas where, in retrospect, they realise that something could have been done better.

Questions which may be covered during the event include:

- Why did we do that then?
- Could we have done it differently?
- What would have helped us to do so?
- Were risks identified and understood?
- How were family members engaged with?
- How did we work together?
- What went well?
- What have I learned?

Once the event has been completed, it is important for line managers to ensure support is in place for their team member as required through their own service.

The results and feedback from the practitioner event are included in the Review Team's final report to the Adult/Child Protection Committee and may result in the initial draft report being amended. It is expected that the Review Team's report highlights recommendations regarding opportunities for learning in order that these can be progressed by the Adult/Child Protection Committee.

Beyond the Learning Review

The undertaking of a learning review in itself does not lead to changes to systems and practice nor does it instinctively improve outcomes. Each Learning Review will identify key learning points for the partnership to consider and once approved by the relevant APC/CPC Committee it will be for the partnership or single agencies to build the learning into its improvement activity with progress being reported back to the Committee.

The APC/CPC will also identify how learning should be shared beyond those who had direct involvement in the case. Staff involved in Learning Reviews have often intimated a willingness to be part of the wider dissemination of learning. Their involvement has been really impactful for those unfamiliar with the case, helping reinforce that learning reviews have had a strong practice improvement lens as well as providing reassurance to the wider workforce.