

ASP Joint Inspection Reports: August 2024-March 2025

About

This provides a snapshot of evidence about chronology improvement based on a quick review of ASP Joint Inspection Reports published between August 2024 and March 2025. An Overview Report (2024) which revisited 6 partnerships inspected in 2017/18 is also included in this review.

Key messages

1. Improvement is happening!



Several cases of 'significant progress' on chronologies are noted across partnerships.

2. Presence is improving



Generally, presence had improved (in one instance from no chronologies in records to present in all).

3. Quality is still an area for improvement



Quality was still 'variable', 'mixed' and 'weak', though quality in one partnership had 'improved significantly' (Orkney)

Contributing factors to low quality included:

- lack of multi-agency content,
- minimal or missing analysis,
- lack of detail,
- lack of impact of past trauma & other significant life events,
- inclusion of referral information and general emails.

IT systems and lack of standard templates compounded these issues.

4. Training, templates and guidance support improvement but aren't enough on their own



- Good templates were 'helpful', 'simple and effective' and 'well-designed'.
- Of particular note were those that were used as a 'multi-agency tool' (Moray) and were 'portable' and 'trauma-informed' for young people transitioning to adult services (East Dunbartonshire)
- In some areas templates had not yet improved presence or quality.
- Improvements to templates needed to support the development of a full history of the adult's life events and trauma experience. Where there was more than one template, the purpose of each needed to be clear.
- Guidance needs to be clear and given time to be implemented.
- Multi-agency training was noted as particularly helpful.

5. Systems can help or hinder



- Systems positively supported chronology practice where chronologies were 'embedded' in electronic databases and where systems enabled 'dynamic chronologies to be created and recorded more easily'.
- In one example a system was noted as storing chronologies in up to three different places which undermined chronology practice.

6. Chronologies are being well used in case conferences



- Several mentions of chronologies being discussed and 'effectively used' in case conferences.

7. More inclusive approaches are needed



- There was one mention of staff sharing the chronology with adults at risk of harm when appropriate.

8. Chronology improvement is being supported through processes, culture and leadership.



Examples include:

- Supportive briefings delivered to practitioners and managers
- Chronology discussions included in supervision
- Council Officer forum to support an 'active voice in change'
- Chronologies added as a standing item on adult protection committee improvement plan
- Chronologies included in multi-agency learning events
- Revised procedures to ensure chairs consistently requested chronologies prior to convening a case conference
- A 'significant culture change' was noted in one report (Orkney) as underpinning improvement
- Strategic leadership supporting collaborative working and close working relationships between Social Work and Health in ASP