



Haringey has a multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH)

This booklet provides practitioners with information you need to know about Haringey's MASH.

September 2013

What is MASH?

The Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance 2013 requires effective sharing of information between professionals and agencies to promote and safeguard the welfare of vulnerable children.

The MASH is a multi-agency safeguarding hub, which brings together a variety of agencies into an integrated multi-agency team, where they can share information that would assist to safeguard vulnerable children. Haringey MASH has been in place since March 2012 and we are the first London Borough to fully implement this model of working.

Which agencies are part of the MASH?

The MASH consists of the following co-located core agencies and satellite agencies:

Core agencies (co-located everyday)

- Core First Response Screening Team (Haringey Council)
- Public Protection Desk (MET Police)
- YOS Police (MET Police)
- Specialist Health Visitors (Whittington Health)

Satellite agencies (co-located at least one day per week):

- Adult Safeguarding Team (Haringey Council)
- Adult Mental Health (Barnet Enfield & Haringey Mental Health Trust)
- Probation (London Probation Trust)
- Housing (Haringey Council)
- Education welfare (Haringey Council)
- Child adolescent Mental Health Service (Barnet Enfield & Haringey Mental Health Trust)
- Youth Offending Service

How does MASH work? – Also refer to MASH process diagram

(A) SCREENING CONTACT/REFERRAL Received

- Screening Team Manager or Practice Manager reads every contact/reviews Framework-I info and decides on action against Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub Threshold Screening criteria

(B) MASH gathering episode or MASH meeting episode assigned to Screening Team Social Worker and FR Duty Team advised

- If a child protection investigation is required (and/or red rag MASH episode assigned to Screening Social Worker but contact passed immediately to Duty TM as a dual outcome. The two processes run in parallel.

(C) MASH gathering episode

- Agency research carried out proportionate to referral information
- MASH gathering episode completed and reviewed by Screening Team Manager
- NB through RAG review contacts can be escalated to MASH meeting if appropriate

(D) 9.30 Referral Consultation Meeting (For MASH meeting gathering episode)

- Referral shared verbally with MASH Agencies. Decision made as to whether case is suitable for MASH and Timescale for return of information agreed.
- NB Attendance by Core MASH agencies is compulsory (CYPS, Health & Police).

(E) MASH meeting – for complex cases

- Attendance by Core MASH agencies is compulsory (CYPS, Health & Police).

Decision making process in MASH meeting:-

Multi agency decision

- Social worker acts as conduit for satellite agencies from e-mail responses
- Attendance required by FR Duty Team (TM/PM)
- Outcomes decided (e.g. IA/Strategy discussion/Sec 47/remains in screening team for further checks)
- Outcome decisions are noted by each individual agency and are recorded on their respective systems.

*Please note: **RAG** process – reviewing the RAG rating occurs throughout the MASH process as cases noted as less urgent can be escalated to urgent and vice versa. Regrading is part of the multi agency discussion.*

The MASH process and consent to information sharing.

From the time of the initial contact or referral, MASH agencies will consider whether to seek consent from the child or young person (of sufficient age and understanding) or their parents to share their personal information with another agency unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so. There are a range of circumstances where the obligation to seek consent do not apply. These include circumstances where seeking consent would:

- a) place a person (the individual, family member, yourself or a third party) at increased risk of significant harm if a child, or serious harm if an adult; or
- b) prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime; or
- c) lead to an unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child, or serious harm to an adult.

Agencies will observe the seven golden rules to information sharing.

- 1) **Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information** but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
- 2) **Be open and honest** with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
- 3) **Seek advice** if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
- 4) **Share with consent where appropriate** and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.
- 5) **Consider safety and well-being:** Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.
- 6) **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure:** Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
- 7) **Keep a record** of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you

decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Frequently asked questions

How will the MASH information be used?

MASH will act as an intelligence hub, in which each agency identifies what information they hold on a child/young person and the adults around them. Each agency will then assess whether it is appropriate for their information to be shared (in line with a 'Purpose Specific Information Sharing Arrangement 2013') with partners in the hub as well as outside of the hub. Collectively an agreement will be made on the best course of action for that referral.

The sensitivity of this information requires that it is held securely and managed in a certain way. The information will be used to risk assess but will not in all cases be shown on the record which is transferred to the First Response Duty Team, CAF or another route. It will be made clear on the record whether there is additional sensitive information available and details for a contact person will be shown.

Will I be breaking client confidentiality if I share information in the MASH?

As stated in the 'Purpose Specific Information Sharing Arrangement' document 'any information that is shared into and within the MASH Hub will be decided on a case-by-case

basis and must be relevant to the aims of this Agreement'. Information will only be shared in accordance with the legal basis and requirements for information sharing with or without consent. Practitioners will apply the practice guidance in the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013; Information Sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers 2008 and the London Child Protection Procedures 2013.

How will MASH affect the way we work with families?

Under MASH agencies work collaboratively with partners to assess and manage risk of cases referred to MASH. They use their experience and knowledge of their discipline to aid improved information sharing and better intervention.

Where will the information shared in MASH be stored?

All information shared will be held on Framework-i (the Council's secure social care IT system), against a MASH gathering episode. If an agency specifies that the information should not be shared outside the hub it will be restricted and only viewable by MASH staff. It will however be made clear on Framework-i that there is further information and who they should contact about it.

What are the MASH line management arrangements?

Line management and supervision arrangements will remain with the host agency. Maintaining independence within professions is essential for the success of the MASH.

Are the public aware of the MASH and that information will be shared?

Posters will be put up in most public places and full information is on the Haringey website.

Is anyone else implementing the MASH model?

There are a number of local authorities in London operating the MASH model. For further information see the London Safeguarding Board website at <http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/mash/>

How do I contact the MASH?

Contact is via First Response. Unless there is already an allocated social worker, all contacts will then be considered for MASH.

Tel: 020 8489 **4592**

020 8489 **4582**

020 8489 **5652**

020 8489 **5762**

Fax: 020 8489 **2110**

Out of Hours (not MASH) : 020 8348 3148

Do I need to tell families I am making this referral and about MASH?

As with any referral to First Response you should discuss your concerns first with families. You should be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information or referral will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

As stated above, There are a range of circumstances where seeking consent to make referral does not apply. These include circumstances where seeking consent would:

- a) place a person (the individual, family member, yourself or a third party) at increased risk of significant harm if a child, or serious harm if an adult; or
- b) prejudice the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime; or
- c) lead to an unjustified delay in making enquiries about allegations of significant harm to a child, or serious harm to an adult.

In these cases you should discuss the matter with the First Response service and agree a way forward.

I am worried about a child or young person but don't know if I should make a referral?

Mash staff are available during working hours to discuss any concerns with you.

I made a referral to First Response but this did not result in a social work allocation and assessment?

The MASH process considers the best intervention for families based on the Haringey Threshold document. In some cases it is assessed that work need to be undertaken by early help services. In these cases another agency may be asked to undertake some work or you may be asked to complete a Common Assessment Framework Assessment. The MASH team are available to discuss the reasons behind this decision with you.

I am still worried about a child. Can I speak to the MASH team again?

The MASH team welcome further discussion with you.