



Multi-agency audits

Guide for professionals

Version 1.2
May 2020





What are multi-agency audits?



Warrington Safeguarding Partnership (WSP) undertakes multi-agency case audit days a minimum of twice a year. The WSP also plans to undertake an annual audit day with Warrington Safeguarding Adult Board to explore learning across both partnerships.

These audit days allow the partnership to assess the quality of the safeguarding work being undertaken, with a specific focus on multi-agency working. All agencies involved with the partnership through the Strategic Group, Quality Assurance Group and Impact Group are invited to attend as audit facilitators. This broad range of individuals are able to evaluate, reflect and learn from the cases being audited. A key part of the day are the reflective case discussions which take place with the practitioners who have worked directly with the children and families.

Most audits are based on a theme. The theme is chosen by the WSP based on priorities identified in their business plan or in response to specific areas of concern or emerging themes. Previous audits have been undertaken around the themes of Fabricated and Induced Illness and Early Help.



How do multi-agency audits work?



Agencies involved with the child/ren and families whose cases are selected for audit are required to complete an audit tool developed by the WSP Quality Assurance group. These are usually completed by managers within the organisation you work for, and provided to the Safeguarding Partnerships team in advance of the audit day to allow for an initial quality assurance of the information.

On the day of the audit, pairs of auditors read the tools received and formulate any specific questions they may have. They facilitate the reflective discussion with the practitioners. After the discussion they provide feedback on the key findings in relation to the case and any specific actions that may need to be undertaken.

Throughout the day, further reflective discussions are held as a group around the theme of the audit and what findings should be reported and recommendations are required.

A report is prepared as a result of the audit day and shared across the partnership. An action plan is then developed for the WSP to carry out.



Multi-agency audits provide an opportunity for you to...

Reflect on your own practice

- Reflect and learn from your practice and that of others.
- Increase understanding of other agencies' roles, systems and practice approaches which will aid how you work together in the future.
- To enable curiosity about how agencies have worked together and ask questions that will benefit improved multi-agency working without blame.
- Improve practice confidence.
- Reflect on professional curiosity when working with children and families.

Learn from others experience

- Hear from a range of professionals about the common and different practice challenges and strengths of delivering services to children and families.
- Recognise and learn from the good practice of your peers, as well as from areas of practice that have been less impactful.
- Have a transparent conversation across agencies which in turn increases understanding of different perspectives, approaches and priorities.

Strengthen your professional network

- Creates opportunities for learning and strengthening practice arrangements beyond the audit process.
- Offers a networking opportunity for all practitioners.

Inform the development of multi-agency practice

- Learning informs and influences practice and service development across all WSP agencies.
- Shares frontline practitioners experience with more senior agency representatives, who can then use it to support and influence future practice development.
- Improve your confidence in professional challenge.

What are the key questions for the audit?



Whilst specific questions may be developed for each thematic audit, the main focus for all audits is around the following questions:

- **What worked well?**
- **What are you worried about for this child/ren and family?**
- **What would you do differently in future?**
- **What impact has your agency had on the lived experience for the child?**



Frequently asked questions



Will my practice be scrutinised?

Audits are facilitated in a way that promotes a safe learning environment for all of those concerned. Discussions are reflective and encourage professionals to look at practice that has worked well alongside identify key learning themes.

Will there be lots of work involved?

Invited professionals are asked to attend a discussion with facilitators and other professionals involved with the child/ren and family. Prior to attending the audit day, you should read the audit tool that your manager/organisation completed and think about how you will answer the key questions in relation to the case.

How do I get involved?

If you have a case selected for audit you will be contacted to attend the audit day, and your manager will be sent the audit tool to complete. The WSP may also offer a briefing session to support with preparation. These are not mandatory, but may be useful for those who have not been involved with an audit previously.