Adolescent Risk Management Group

Terms of Reference and Information Sharing Protocol
April 2011

Review date: March 2012

Gateshead Council
www.gateshead.gov.uk
Adolescent Risk Management Group

Terms of Reference

Introduction

The outlined protocols are to act as terms of reference and guidance during the course of agreed information sharing between partners within the Adolescent Risk Management Group.

Multi-agency working is key to tackling the complex issues associated with young people who are at risk of harm from their own behaviour and in particular, cases that are perceived as “high risk” or “very high risk”.

Adolescent Risk Management Group meetings combine up to date risk assessment information with a comprehensive analysis of a young person’s needs and links these directly to the provision of appropriate services for all those involved in an Adolescent Risk Management case.

The sharing of information gained through the Adolescent Risk Management Group can only be used for these purposes agreed at the meeting and cannot be used for any other purposes without prior authorisation from the Chair of the Adolescent Risk Management Group and the appropriate Lead Agency providing specific information. The sharing of information will be governed by the Crime and Disorder Act, the Children Act, the Data Protection Act and the Human Rights Act.

The principles of these terms of reference will be applied fairly regardless of gender, disability, nationality, race or ethnic origin, age, religion or sexual orientation.

Purpose of the Adolescent Risk Management Group

The purpose of the Adolescent Risk Management Group is to manage the risks presented by vulnerable adolescents in Gateshead who are at risk to themselves from their own behaviour.

- The Adolescent Risk Management Group will facilitate, monitor and evaluate effective information sharing between multi-agency partners, to enable appropriate intervention actions and to safeguard “high risk/very high risk” young people.

- The Adolescent Risk Management Group will promote a fully integrated multi-agency vulnerability checklist assessment tool and plan for each young person. Cooperation and partnership agreement is essential to enable this process and is regarded as best practice.

- The Adolescent Risk Management Group will ensure continuous risk assessment of “high risk/very high risk” cases and will ensure that the young person is kept informed of all decisions made within the Adolescent Risk Management Group.
The young person may attend the Adolescent Risk Management Group meetings supported by their key worker/lead professional. The agreed lead agency representative will inform the young person of the agreed Adolescent Risk Management Group actions.

**Responsibilities of Group Members**

Identified members of the ARMG must attend all meetings and identify a deputy from their organisation to attend in their absence.

Members would normally be contacted by the Chair if they have missed two consecutive meetings, in order to ascertain if there are any difficulties. If there is non-attendance at the next meeting, the Chair will contact the member again to discuss further involvement.

At present the membership of the group is:

- Frances Powell – Head of Service, Children and Families and Youth Offending
- Susan Butler – Service Manager, Youth Offending Team
- Elaine Devaney – Service Manager, LAC and Corporate Parenting
- Maurice Woodward – Service Manager, Disabled Children and OOH Service
- Adele Wright – Service Manager, Safeguarding and Care Planning
- Debra Patterson – Service Manager, Referral and Assessment
- Louise Gill – LSCB Business Manager
- Frances Ewart - Safeguarding Manager for Education
- Lisa Philliskirk – Service Manager, Gateshead Housing Company
- Ken Youngman – Area Manager, Area Based Teams
- Ruth Gaul – Service Manager, Community Safety
- Ron Cruikshanks – Police Representative
- Siobourn Lannen – SMART Representative
- Tonia Forster – CAMHS Representative
- Judith Corrigan – Health Representative
- Carol Belk – FIP Representative

The above list is not exhaustive, consideration will also be given to requesting additional professional support from specialist agencies.

**Risk Assessment**

In order for an Adolescent Risk Management Group to work effectively there needs to be a common understanding of risk assessment and an understanding of “high risk/very high risk” amongst all Adolescent Risk Management Group core members. (Refer to the ARMG Vulnerability Check list document).

The formal Vulnerability Checklist assessment should be completed by the lead agency in a multi-agency meeting, identifying the initial referral and forward the documentation to the admin worker (Gemma Crawley), who will agenda this for the next meeting. The Team Manager from the lead agency should attend the ARMG panel and present the case.
Referral Process

The Vulnerability Checklist will identify concerns and risks and recommend specific intervention measures to reduce risk and support the young person. All agencies are asked to use the Risk Matrix checklist when making a referral to the ARMG process. The Team Manager from the lead agency will agenda the Vulnerability Checklist documentation and present this to the ARMG panel.

Confidentiality

Within the ARMG there are agreed boundaries of confidentiality. ARMG representatives must respect these boundaries which are held under a shared understanding that:

- Disclosure of information outside of the meeting, beyond that agreed will be considered a breach of confidentiality.
- All documentation will be marked classified as confidential.
- The confidentiality statement will be read by the ARMG chair at the start of each meeting and a copy of the signed agreement will be kept as a record of attendance and acknowledgement of confidentiality.
- All representatives should be aware of the confidentiality statement and the need to store it correctly and in accordance with each agencies data protection procedures, storage of records and retention policy.
- Information sharing between agencies outside of meetings will be via secure email arrangements.

Information Sharing

Disclosure of sensitive information can be justified on the grounds that is necessary to:

- To prevent an act(s) of crime taking place
- To prevent injury or harm to the health/welfare/safeguarding of the young person or persons.

Legislation that guides information sharing is:

- Crime and Disorder Act
- Data Protection Act
- Human Rights Act

ARMG representatives will attend meetings to discuss only relevant and current matters relating to “high risk” or “very high risk” young people. The shared information obtained through this meeting can only be used for official ARMG purposes and cannot be used for any other purpose without prior and authorised approval from the appropriate agency providing the specific information.

If there are cases where consent is not agreed by the young person regarding the disclosure of sensitive information for the purposes of protecting/safeguarding the young person, information can be shared under the duty of care to protect “high risk”
or “very high risk” young people. You must always record your decision and the rationale around how that decision was reached.

The purpose of information sharing is to increase the safety of the young person. Appropriate information based on perceived risk and vulnerabilities will enable and enhance a multi-agency plan of intervention and safe partnership working.

**ARMG Panels**

ARMG Panels in Gateshead are chaired by the Head of Service Children and Families and Youth Offending. The deputy chair is the Service Manager for LAC and Corporate Parenting. The ARMG Chair is supported by an administrator who takes the minutes and manages the administrative needs of the ARMG process.

The ARMG Panel agenda is circulated to all nominated representatives in the agreed timescale prior to the ARMG Panel, this agenda should be marked as confidential.

On receipt of the agenda, each agency is requested to complete research on all cases identified. This process enables consistency in the information sharing process and within the meeting.

At the start of each meeting the confidentiality statement is read and agreed. Attendees will sign up to this confidentiality statement as part of the attendance process.

All minutes and actions are recorded for approval by the Chair. These are then distributed at the earliest opportunity for actions to be completed.

The ARMG Administrator will keep a record of each meeting including attendance, minutes, actions and a risk log as part of the formal recording and review process.

Case summaries/actions are to be updated at the earliest possible opportunity. Individual case files and risk log should be updated and kept on a secure facility.

**Case Closure**

Individual cases will be closed when all partner agencies are in agreement that the risk is reduced and safety is increased to the young person and that there are no outstanding concerns or actions.

**Declaration of acceptance and participation in ARMG Panels**

A participatory agreement page is attached to this document. This states that all of the information within the terms of reference has been agreed and accepted by all appointed ARMG representatives.

By signing this agreement all signatories declare their commitment to the procedures set out in this document and declare that they are fully aware of the ARMG process.
The agreed terms of reference are a live and ongoing document. As such these will be reviewed and amended to meet the needs of the ARMG function. Amendments to the terms of reference are to be discussed within the ARMG Panel. These will be agreed and approved by members prior to the amendments being made. All amendments will be recorded as part of the ARMG minutes.

A new participant declaration will be required on amendment to the terms of reference.

The Designated Officers formally agree to the following:

- To subscribe to the principles outlined in the protocol
- To work to the procedures outlined in the protocol
- To fully implement the protocol within their own agency, ensuring all staff knows of it’s existence and to support the work of the ARMG
- To supply information within the bounds of this protocol
- To contribute to the development of trust and confidence between the signatory agencies by working within the framework of the protocol to disclose, retain and dispose of data for the purpose of supporting the ARMG.

**Signatory Agency: Safeguarding, Quality and Improvement**

Signature: 
Date:

**Signatory Agency: Gateshead Youth Offending Team**

Signature: 
Date:

**Signatory Agency: LAC and Corporate Parenting**

Signature: 
Date:

**Signatory Agency: Disabled Children and OOH Service**

Signature: 
Date:

**Signatory Agency: Safeguarding and Care Planning**

Signature: 
Date:

**Signatory Agency: Referral and Assessment**

Signature: 
Date:
Signatory Agency: LSCB Business Manager

Signature:     Date:

Signatory Agency: Safeguarding Manager for Education

Signature:     Date:

Signatory Agency: Gateshead Housing Company

Signature:     Date:

Signatory Agency: Area Based Teams

Signature:     Date:

Signatory Agency: Community Safety

Signature:     Date:

Signatory Agency: Police Representative

Signature:     Date:

Signatory Agency: SMART Representative

Signature:     Date:

Signatory Agency: CAMHS Representative

Signature:     Date:

Signatory Agency: Health Representative

Signature:     Date:
Signatory Agency: FIP Representative

Signature:  Date: