



Family Nursing & Home Care

Standard Operating Procedures

Strategy Meetings

April 2022

Document Profile

Type	Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
Title	Strategy Meetings
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Category	Guidance
Version	Version 1
Approval Route	Organisational Governance Approval Group
Approved by	Organisational Governance Approval Group
Date approved	6 April 2022
Review date	6 April 2023
Document Status	This is a controlled document. Whilst it may be printed, the electronic version posted on the intranet is the controlled copy. Any printed copies of this document are not controlled. As a controlled document, it should not be saved onto local or network drives but should always be accessed from the intranet.

Version Control / Changes Made

Date	Version	Summary of changes made
Nov 2021	1	New Standard Operating Procedures

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Introduction

A Strategy Meeting is called when there is indication that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm. The meeting called on the same day or reported concern, if a child is at risk of significant harm (or within 72 hours if appropriate). The Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) determines the risks for child/children and if children's service have a statutory right to intervene to protect. The purpose of a Strategy Meeting is to determine whether there are grounds for an Article 42 Procedure.

An Article 42 procedure will commence if there, are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

A social worker will complete Article 42 procedure within 3 working days, where the decision to start a child protection investigation will proceed.

Where concerns are substantiated and the child is seen to be suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, a Child Protection Conference should be convened. The initial child protection conference (ICPC) will be called within 15 working days of the initial strategy meeting, (where a child is already on a child protection plan or a child is looked after then decisions will be made from the strategy meeting to protect and reduce risk).

A Strategy Meeting is used to:

- share available information
- agree the conduct and timing of any criminal investigation
- decide whether an assessment under Article 42 of Children (Jersey) Law 2002 (Article 42 Enquiries) should be initiated, or continued if it has already begun
- Consider assessment and key action points, for the MDT to mitigate risk.
- plan how the Article 42 Enquiry should be undertaken (if one is to be initiated), including the need for child protection/Child Sexual Abuse or Child Sexual Exploitation medical assessment, and determine who will carry out what actions, by when and for what purpose
- Agree what action is required immediately to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child, and/or provide interim services and support. (if the child is in hospital, decisions should also be made about how to secure the safe discharge of the child)
- Agree if this will be a single agency, Children's Social Worker (CSW) or joint agency Single Agency and Police,
- Agree when the child will be seen by the social worker during the course of these enquiries

- agree the methods by which the child's wishes and feelings will be ascertained so that they can be taken into account when making decisions
- consider diversity issues in respect of the child and family, consider how these should be taken into account and to establish whether an interpreter will be required; and
- consider the needs of other children who may be affected (e.g. siblings and other children, such as those living in the same household, and/or in contact with alleged abusers)
- determine what information from the Strategy Discussion/Meeting will be shared with the family, unless such information sharing may place a child at increased risk of significant harm or jeopardise Police investigations into any alleged offence/s
- determine if legal advice is required

SOP 1 Request to attend a Strategy Meeting

Purpose

Where there is a multi-agency approach required, a strategy meeting will be co-ordinated and chaired by a Children's Service Team manager.

Staff in FNHC will participate in strategy meetings where they will contribute and/or attend where appropriate to inform the multi-agency process. Written contribution will be in relation to FNHC documented health matters on attendance analysis of risk will be made from the child's presented health related matters.

The decision to attend the Strategy meeting is determined by the relevant service, levels of involvement and potential outcomes for the child as a direct result of FNHC staff attending. That is, where FNHC have information of relevance to share with the process. Where capacity to attend is an issue then this to be escalated to FNHC Safeguarding Lead/Operational Lead, by the staff invited to the meeting. Written contributions are to be made to all invites to strategy meetings, where practicably possible regardless of attendance.

The FNHC Safeguarding Lead may attend meetings based upon the analysis of risk/conflicts of interest and/or Child and Family staff capacity to attend. Where this is the case then FNHC Safeguarding Lead will inform relevant FNHC staff of attendance. .

Scope

Family Nursing & Home Care are invited to all Strategy Meetings that occur between the working hours of 9 to 5, these can be called at short notice and happen daily Meetings can be rearranged repeatedly in order for the correct agencies to be present. It is acknowledged that because of this, it is not possible to accommodate all strategy meetings.

This SOP details the process to follow when a request is received.

Core Requirements

Generally, the Operational Lead, Safeguarding Lead, Health Visiting Hub and School Nursing Team and where appropriate Children's Looked After Nurse (CLN), will receive meeting requests. These can be duplicate invites but at times, service specific.

The service/team determine the need to attend and make Operational lead and FNHC Safeguarding lead aware where it is deemed not relevant for FNHC to attend or capacity/conflict prevents this. FNHC information will be shared as contribution to the strategy process where FNHC hold health information of relevance to the case.

Where there is, or suspected to be, Non-Accidental Injury, Child Sexual Exploitation or Child Sexual Abuse, Children's social work will request the attendance of other professionals (such as paediatricians). It is the responsibility of the person organising the meeting to invite a paediatrician, it is good practice for FNHC staff to state a paediatrician/ Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) should attend if they identify this as a gap.

FNHC staff will make a request from the attending paediatrician/SARC practitioner for a copy of the Child Protection/Neglect/Child Sexual Abuse/Child Sexual Exploitation Medical if the outcome will inform their care of the child/young person.

SOP 2 Attendance at, or contributing to (non-attendance), Strategy Meetings

Purpose

Using the decision-making guidance in SOP 1, a decision will be made for either attendance at the strategy meeting or contribution by submitting a relevant summary report of FNHC involvement and its analysis.

It is an expectation when in attendance that the practitioner, as part of a multi-disciplinary decision, will give their professional analysis of the risk to the child. This will help determine if the case meets the threshold for Article 42 procedure. Therefore, professionals participating in Strategy Meetings must have their agency's relevant information relating to the child available in order to contribute to the discussion/meeting and must be sufficiently senior/experienced to make decisions on behalf of their agency. If unsure, then this can be established with the line manager/Operational Lead/FNHC Safeguarding Lead.

Scope

This SOP details the actions that staff should take if they are attending a strategy meeting or contributing in writing.

Core Requirements

If staff are contributing rather than attending, then an email with written feedback will be sent in a timely manner to the Social Work Business Hub. If attending, staff will prepare a short time scaled chronology of any recent events and a concise report with the available health information relating to the child and parent if applicable.

If the meeting is called at short notice, staff must be able to access EMIS to give a resume from the available records where a verbal account of the content of the records will be minuted.

Staff will share relevant, lawful and proportionate information.

Attach any reports to the relevant EMIS care record.

Contribute to case analysis on behalf of FNHC.

SOP 3 Actions following the strategy meeting

Purpose

It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Strategy Discussion/Meeting to ensure that the decisions and agreed actions are fully recorded using an appropriate record. A copy of the minutes will be made available for all those who have been invited or involved, (within 5 working days.). Strategy meeting minutes will be distributed by Children's Social Work Business support within 5 working days. These will be uploaded to EMIS when received. FNHC actions will be followed up and evidenced on EMIS record.

Scope

This SOP covers recording, information sharing, action planning and liaison within the organisation. Where required, liaison required with outside agencies/professionals.

Core Requirements

Following attendance at the Strategy Meeting, staff will record attendance on the relevant EMIS care record using the appropriate EMIS template.

Record only what is necessary, as the contemporaneous minutes will follow. When the minutes are received, these will be uploaded onto the relevant EMIS care record.

From the Strategy Meeting minutes, staff will record on the relevant EMIS care record the outcome decision and if the case has met the threshold for Article 42 Enquiry, and if the child has been offered a child protection or child sexual assault medical, where required.

Record actions for FNHC staff where it is the responsibility of FNHC Child and Family Staff/CLN to carry out any actions agreed at the strategy meeting within relevant time scales.

The attendee at the strategy meeting will share actions for other staff in FNHC via 'Tasking' on EMIS; clearly stating the required actions, which are specifically related to FNHC Staff.

Where relevant, liaise with other professionals within, and outside of the organisation, to inform plans of care. For example, those children who may require pre-birth assessment or children who have become Looked After.

SOP 4 Resolving professional differences

Purpose

“Partnership working depends on resolving conflict as soon as possible. Professional differences of opinion can block effective partnership working and can lead to poorer outcomes for children and adults at risk. Effective partnership working depends on understanding differences of opinion and working towards resolving professional disagreement as soon as possible.”

(SPB Resolving Professional Differences/Escalation Policy (2020), page 3¹)

Where there are unresolved differences of opinion about the outcomes of a Strategy Meeting, these should be resolved using the resolving professional differences/escalation policy (2020) and where staff will be supported by senior managers in the respective agencies.

Scope

This SOP details the actions that staff should take when faced with professional differences about the outcomes of a Strategy Meeting.

Core Requirements

Use the Resolving Professional Differences/Escalation Policy where conflict about the outcomes of a Strategy Meeting/Discussion exist.

<https://www.fnhc.org.je/media/43460/20210126-v5-resolving-professional-differences-escalation-policy-final-operational.pdf>

Action within a timescale commensurate with the need to safeguard the child and in accordance with the Resolving Professional Differences/Escalation Policy.

¹ Safeguarding Partnership Board (2020) Resolving professional Differences/Escalation Policy (joint Adult and Child), available at <https://www.fnhc.org.je/media/43460/20210126-v5-resolving-professional-differences-escalation-policy-final-operational.pdf> (last accessed 29/11/21)