

## Overview

The Lead Professional role;

- Is for the family, not the individual
- Aims to ensure the provision of holistic support to meet the individual needs of all children, young people and adults within a whole family.

In some settings and services such as nurseries and mental health services, a professional linked to a child or adult is known as a keyworker or caseworker. This means they are the designated professional from that service for that child or adult, but does not mean they are the Lead Professional for the whole family.

## How the Lead Professional is identified

The Lead Professional can be anybody who works with children, young people, adults or families, who has had access to the appropriate training and supervision in order to undertake the role.

Depending on the needs of the family, who undertakes the Lead Professional role may be decided by the Team Around the Family or Social Work units (taking into consideration the points shown on the right) or may be decided by other services involved with the family.

Central records of who is taking the Lead Professional role for families are held on the County Council's ONE system. ONE users are able to view this record themselves in the 'tracking' involvement. Non County Council users are able to contact the Early Help Hub (EHH) 01480 376 666 [Early.HelpHub@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:Early.HelpHub@cambridgeshire.gov.uk) to request information or update the record following a change.

## Principles used when identifying the Lead Professional

The following principles should be considered when identifying who should be the Lead Professional:

- It should be decided with the views of the family in mind
- It is often the person who is most involved already
- The Lead Professional is not necessarily the person who initiated the involvement or assessment.
- If the family begin working with Children's Social Care under section 47, Child Protection, the Social Work Unit will always take the Lead Professional role.

## What is expected of the Lead Professional Role

### Emotional and Practical Support

- Build a trusting and collaborative relationship with the family. Be persistent to engage them where necessary
- Help them feel part of their plan and central to decision making, despite involvement from what may be several services.
- Provide emotional and practical support via regular contact with the child, young person or family (not just in times of crisis) e.g. by phone, visits, email

### Assessments and planning

- Ensure there has been an assessment of the whole family's needs
- Ensure there is a Plan which clearly identifies the outcomes the Team Around the Family / Child in Need / Core group are working towards, who is doing what, and how success will be measured from the Outcomes Framework
- Ensure the Plan is regularly reviewed and updated and shared with members of the Team Around the Family

### Records

- Ensure the record of who the Lead Professional is on the County Council's ONE system is accurate (ONE users can check this direct, others can contact the EHH). Make sure you inform the EHH if the LP role changes.
- Ensure the Family Plan is on ONE or electronically submitted to the Early Help Hub for Non-ONE users.
- All Lead Professionals, when they close their involvement or the Family Plan is closed, should complete a Closing Summary

### Co-ordination

- Facilitate Team Around the Family, CIN or Core Group meetings ensuring they are held regularly as required.
- Ensure any services which are needed in addition to those already identified, are contacted and involved.
- Advocate on behalf of the family where necessary
- Be a central contact point for families and professionals.
- Coordinate any interventions that the family is receiving and help minimise duplication
- Proactively manage the dynamics inherent in multi-agency working. Ensure members of the Team Around the Family understand the role of the Lead Professional and their role as a member.
- Ensure information is being shared in line with a clear agreement between professionals and with the family.

### What is not expected of Lead Professionals

The Lead Professional is not an expert in all aspects of the different needs the family presents. It is therefore vital that all members of the Team Around the Family contribute fully. In addition:

- The Lead Professional is not responsible or accountable for the actions required by or carried out by other professionals within the Team Around the Family
- Being the Lead Professional does not mean that person is the 'best' professional within the Team Around the Family, all professionals are experts in their own field and all contributions valued as such
- The Lead Professional is not expected to respond personally to unmet need but rather to consider with the Team Around the Family how this could be met