

3-month interim plan to assist GP referrals

into Somerset Childrens Services from 21/12/2020

It is recognised that alongside other professionals, GPs are facing unprecedented demands upon time and resources due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In this vein, the usual referral routes into Childrens Services are being amended for a 3 months period (to be reviewed). **This will remove the need for the GP to complete an EHA form and allow referrals to be made by phone.**

As of 21st December 2020, the following should be followed when a GP is requesting statutory involvement of Childrens Services for a child under Child in Need, Child Protection or multi-agency support/ early help through the Family Intervention Service (FIS):

1. **Telephone Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224** as is current practice
2. Explain your role as a GP and ask to be put through to the **FIRST RESPONSE DUTY SOCIAL WORKER**. The call advisor will ask for details of the child/young person, their family and demographics to establish whether the child/young person already has an allocated social worker or open to the Family Intervention Service. If there is an allocated social or FIS worker, the call will be transferred to them.
3. The duty social worker will take details and if statutory intervention by children social care or multi-agency support through FIS is considered necessary then the duty social worker will complete relevant sections of the EHA form to progress the matter.
4. The duty social worker will confirm the GP's secure email address whilst on the call so that a copy of the EHA form can be sent as confirmation of the discussion and to allow the GP to check for accuracy. The EHA form will result in either level 4 / CSC or level 3 / Family Intervention services' involvement dependent on the needs identified.
5. The EHA form will be taken as an accurate record of the discussion, unless the GP makes renewed contact within 4 hours to share further information. If an immediate safeguarding children concern has been identified a strategy discussion will be convened from the information already shared. The GP should make every effort to take part in this discussion.

Please note: The principle of consent still needs to be applied when referring into CSC or level 3 services. Consent will need to be sought from parents/carers by the GP unless it is an immediate safeguarding children concern, or if doing so would put the child at further risk of harm.