

EAST KENT COMMUNITY ALCOHOL SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL RECOMMENDATION 12, VICTORIA CLIMBIE REPORT

Introduction

The Victoria Climbie inquiry was headed by Lord Laming. Its findings were presented to Parliament in January 2003. General Recommendations 12 was designated as an item which should be implemented by all appropriate agencies within 3 months of the report's publication.

The purpose of the following is to outline the way in which this requirement can be met with respect to clients making contact with the East Kent Community Alcohol Service (EKCAS).

General Recommendation 12 states that:

"Front-line staff in each of the agencies which regularly come into contact with families with children must ensure that in each new contact, basic information about the child is recorded. This must include the child's name, address, age, the name of the child's primary carer, the child's GP and the name of the child's school if the child is of school age. Gaps in this information should be passed on to the relevant authority in accordance with local arrangements. (Paragraph 17.97)"

Protocol

1. Workers assessing clients referred to EKCAS should attempt to ascertain whether or not the required information (as above) is already held on record by third parties, including agencies making a referral to the service. Where such information is already held on record, the details required should be entered on case records held by the alcohol service.

2. Where the required information is not already held on record, or where it is likely that the information will have become outdated, personnel within the alcohol service should gather the required information at earliest opportunity during a new contact with the service.
3. EKCAS personnel should ensure that clients are made aware of the reasons why this information is required and the uses to which it will be put.
4. EKCAS personnel will ensure that the collection of such information will occur at points and in a way which does not jeopardise the well-being of the referred client with particular regard to the need to provide a safe and welcoming environment to which clients will feel able to attach.
5. EKCAS personnel will need to be particularly sensitive to the position of female clients who are far more likely to have immediate custody and control of dependent children than their male peers. More especially, it is acknowledged that it is difficult for women with drinking problems to enter into treatment and the gathering of the required information must be conducted in a way which balances the need to protect the interests of children with that of providing a helpful response to those experiencing alcohol-related difficulties.
6. Any situations in which there may be cause for concern as to the welfare of dependent children will continue to be dealt with under aegis of existing Child Protection measures.
7. EKCAS case records must have a clear means of displaying:

- whether there is no need to collect the required information (i.e. there are no dependent children involved),
or
- that the information is already held on record
or
- that the information is required but has not yet been collected.

Reference

www.victoria-climbie-inquiry.org.uk/finreport/finreport.htm

Bill Reading
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