

Moray Chief Social Work Officer

Annual Report

2022 - 2023



Tracy Stephen

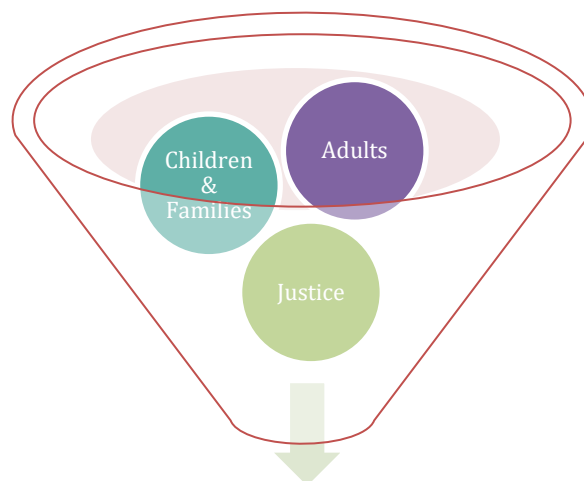
Introduction

I am pleased to present the Chief Social Work Officer report for the period spanning 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

In what has been a particularly challenging year, with need increasing due to cost of living rises, the recovery from the Covid pandemic and the pressures on health care systems, along with recruitment challenges across all elements of Health and Social Care, it has been heartening to continue to support the achievement of improved outcomes for many vulnerable people within Moray communities.

Staff have worked exceptionally hard during this period and retained a focus on getting it right for all people who come into contact with our services. Our workforce are working in unprecedented circumstances and a learning and improvement journey continues and staff are doing this with commitment, energy and tenaciousness.

I came into post as Chief Social Work Officer part way through the year, with the previous incumbent retiring in 2022. That transition was managed to ensure continuity, oversight and leadership from the Chief Social Work Officer continued uninterrupted. The delegation of Children and Families and Justice Social Work came to a conclusion this year and at the end of the reporting period, delegation was agreed by the Scottish Government. This aligns Children and Families and Justice Social Work services with all other Social Work services across the Health and Social Care Partnership which creates opportunities for joined up working.



Chief Social Work Officer and Head of Service

Governance, accountability, and statutory functions

The Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) holds a key leadership role within the Health and Social Care Partnership and within the council itself. The CSWO sits within the Senior Management Team of both the council and HSCP (Health and Social Care Partnership). There is a requirement for the CSWO to consult with both the Chief Executive of the Council and the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care, as the line management responsibility sits in the HSCP structure, due to both the delegation of Children's and Justice Social Work to the Integration Joint Board (IJB), but also as a result of the previous CSWO having retired, whose substantive role was within adult services, which already sat within IJB structures.

Groups Chaired by CSWO



The CSWO supports both the Adult and Child Protection Committees. The CSWO also attends a national CSWO meeting, as well as linking into Social Work Scotland Standing Committee and related subgroups.

The governance and accountability arrangements for Moray remain chiefly unchanged throughout this period. The CSWO recognised there was need to develop the scope of governance in relation to Practice Governance meetings with a view that Children and Families and Justice Social Work were also in the process of delegation to the IJB, which concluded in April 2023, and opportunities for alignment within these processes.

This year also saw the deletion of the Head of Service role for Children and Families and Justice Social Work, as that post was earlier amalgamated with the Head of Adult Services and Chief Social Work Officer as part of efficiency savings. There will be a need to assess the impact of these changes on services as the next reporting period comes to a close.

A new, independent chair for Adult and Child Protection Committee has been appointed and has provided leadership, oversight and governance for some of our Public Protection work. This sits alongside the Community Justice Partnership Group, The Alcohol and Drug Partnership, Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership and a number of related sub groups. We have a structure that sits below the GIRFEC Leadership Group as reporting sub groups, such as our Corporate Parenting Strategic Group, Child Poverty Group, Child Rights and Participation, Child Planning, Wellbeing Partnership Group, for example. These groups are all created to align and report on the priorities of Moray's Children's Services Plan.

There were a number of internal audits during this time, all of which have been reported within the Audit, Performance and Risk Committee. There was also an external audit commissioned by the Chief Officer, Health and Social Care Moray to allow for the progression of some improvements required around activity related to commissioning services. This work and related improvements are ongoing and continue to be reported against.

There are a number of other meetings which are attended by leaders across both Children, Justice and Adult's Social Work to allow managers to have connection and receive updates, make decisions and escalate concerns. There has been significant progress made by the Policy, Commissioning and Quality Assurance team within Children's Social Work, allowing for some key processes to be formalised. This has also allowed for the management of the Consultant Practitioners to align with this team and have line management there to develop the triangulation of case file audit findings, complaints and feedback from families.



There was an inspection of Placement Services work within the Children and Families team, which includes our Fostering, Adoption and Continuing Care services. The report for this inspection showed significant improvement on the inspection which took place early in 2022.

We were also involved in a number of Care Inspectorate National Reviews, including a review of Diversion, Secure Care and Services to Children with a Disability.

There were a number of challenges in relation to recruitment this year and as such this left services with a number of vacancies, including that of some management positions. This created additional pressures for Children and Families Social Work services alongside Community Adult Learning Disabilities teams who were most affected by these vacancies, alongside the challenges of recruiting carers for the Care at Home service.

Posts of Consultant Social Work Practitioner are well established in both Adult and Children's Services. Consultants work with Social Work practitioners and managers to support complex cases, model best practice, deliver learning and development sessions and set practice standards in their respective areas. Within Adult Services, Consultant Practitioners hold specific themes in the areas of SDS, Adult Support and Protection and Mental Health. This is on top of the practice support that the Consultant Practitioners provide to Social Work practitioners.

The current governance structure brings Children's and Justice Services in line with the Health and Social Care Partnership services. Within Health and Social Care Moray, the CSWO is part of the Senior Management Team who meet on a weekly basis. There are a number of governance meetings across the Health and Social Care Partnership, within Social Work, Practice Governance Boards report into the Governance of the IJB and related Committee Sub Groups.

CSWO Reports into a number of Committees



For part of the reporting period, Children and Justice Services remained as part of the governance structure of Moray Council and reported performance into the Education, Children's and Leisure Services Committee. Children's and Justice Social Work thereafter reports into the same structure as Adult services.

As a result of changes to the Head of Children's and Adult Services roles, there is an increase in the scope of the newly created role of Head of Service and Chief Social Work Officer. This role sits alongside another Head of Service/ Deputy Chief Officer role within the HSCP. The increase in responsibility and tasks has an impact on the ability to exercise the full scope of the role, in the main due to the increase in meetings and reporting across different systems. This also has an impact on the ability to oversee performance across both Adult and Children Services as the volume of activity is significantly more than the original posts had oversight and accountability for. This will be measured and reported against at the next reporting period progresses.

The Chief Social Work Officer relies on reporting from Service Managers, Locality Managers and Consultant Practitioners in order to scrutinise data and have sufficient oversight of the wider service delivery and quality of social work practice. Developments in this area are required to ensure that the right information is being collected and scrutinised.

Service Quality and Performance

Children and families

This year has seen a number of changes within Children and Families Social Work. An improvement plan was implemented within Placement Services as a result of an inspection by the Care Inspectorate which took place in March 2022. A further full inspection in the reporting period recognised the significant improvement work that had gone into creating changes to support positive outcomes for care experienced and children and young people who are cared for in Moray.

Across the department there were a number of key personnel changes, with some retirements meaning changes in the leadership team and some challenges with recruitment resulting in teams having temporary management arrangements and requirements for creative solutions to ensure staff had the support they needed.

The rollout of child protection training for practitioners continued into this period with a focus on ensuring social work staff had a robust working knowledge of the National Child Protection Guidance in Scotland (2021).

The creation of a Commissioning, Policy and Quality Assurance team meant that areas which required policy development could be progressed and as a result policies were updated or developed in relation to:

- Looked After Children
- Multi-agency child protection procedures
- Supervision policy and procedures
- Transfer of cases procedures
- Multi-agency reflective case discussion procedures
- Individual placement agreement flowchart
- Data Protection Impact Assessment for social work
- Commissioning procedure
- Complaint handling procedure
- Solution Orientated approach

The team also allowed for progression in improvement work related to

- The oversight and management of complaints
- The development of feedback mechanisms
- File audits
- Feedback from families in contact with the service
- Learning and development opportunities
- Evaluation and monitoring of training

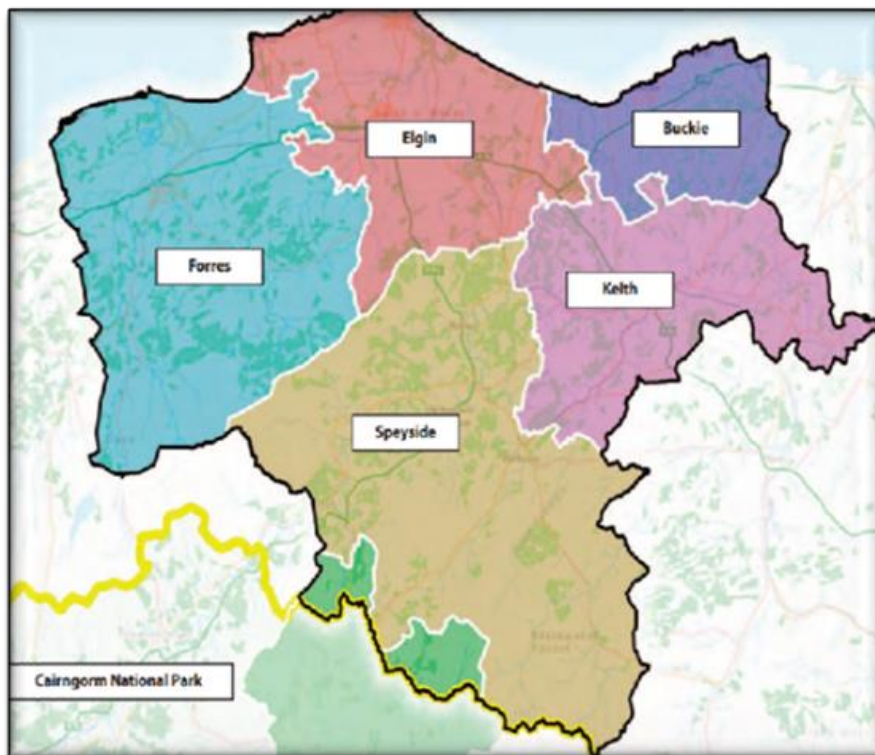
getting
it right
for every child
in Moray

We will
#KeepThePromise

Key areas of development for this reporting period;



Moray



Population of approx
96,410

Approx 95% of young people under 16 identify
as White Scottish

18.8% under 18

14% of families have
two children or less

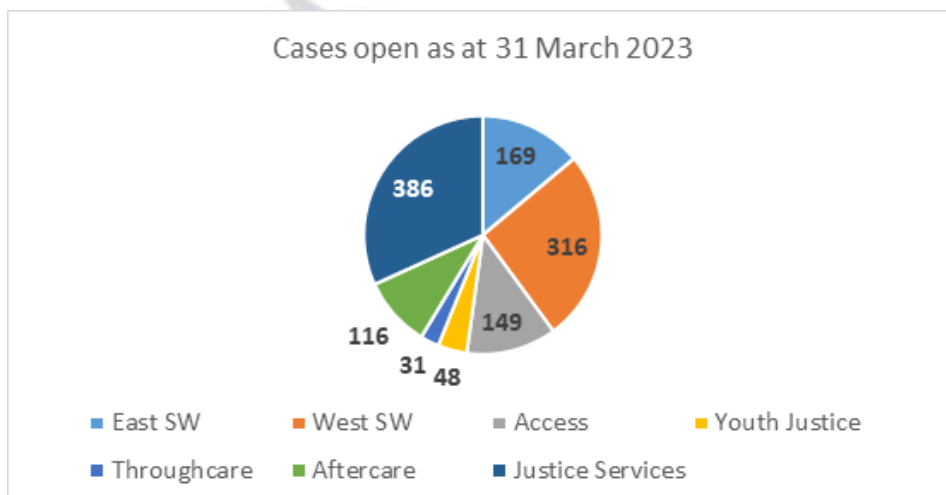
1% of children and young people
have a 'looked after' status (CSP Moray JSNA 2022)

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it right
for every child
in Moray

WCVV
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Overall at the end of March 2023 there were 1215 open cases to the Children and Families and Justice Social Work department. Excluding aftercare cases, 23% of the people using all other services had previous care experience.

- Access Team 149
- West Area Team 316
- East Area Team 169
- Youth Justice 48
- Throughcare and Aftercare 147
- Justice Service 386

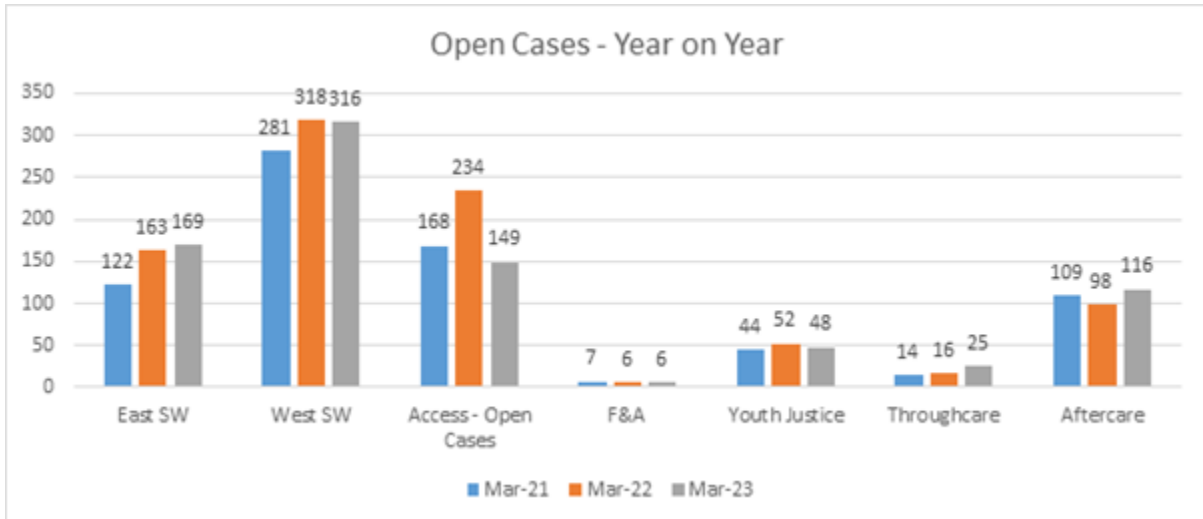


There were 3014 referrals into the Access Team in the year 22/23 which is an overall increase of 34.36% on the previous year.

Of these 729 were Child Protection referrals which is a 68% increase in Child Protection referrals on the previous year.

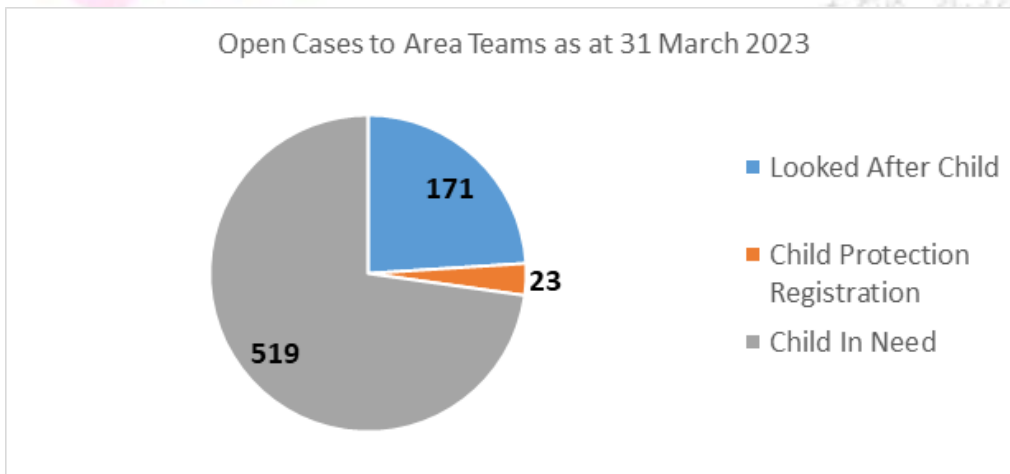
There was also an increase of 84 referrals relating to domestic abuse which is an increase of 26.4%. The rise in Child Protection Referrals received in within the Access Team which has placed additional pressure upon Social Work practitioners who have struggled with recruitment across this period.

Agreement from Moray Council Committee in January 2022 allowed for reinvestment of savings from Children and Families Social Work for the commissioning of two new third sector services to enable families to be supported in a different way and to reduce the reliance on care placements both in and out of area. These services are still in their infancy and will be reported on at the next reporting period.



Area Teams

West and East Area Teams had an average of 4.7% Child Protection Cases open across the services. All Children and Families Social Work teams have had challenges with recruitment. There were 171 looked after and accommodated children. 23 children's names were placed on the North East Child Protection Register at the end of March 23.



*Numbers exclude justice services and aftercare services

Overall there was a 20% decrease in children being placed in local authority care meaning that there were 12 fewer children and young people formally accommodated than the previous year. Of the children and young people who were leaving care (no longer formally looked after) there were 18 who left care and this

represented a decrease of 26.7% from the previous year. Overall looked after children numbers in Moray reduced by 4% between March 22 and March 23.

Out of Area Placements

In April of 2022 there were 32 agency placements which moved to 27 by the end of the financial year. For residential care the number of placements reduced from 24 to 18 and for foster care there was a small increase from 8 to 9.

In 2022/23 there was the development of a Placement Oversight Meeting. This allowed for oversight of agency placements and supported care planning and ensured that high cost care options were monitored. There was also work to refresh the carer recruitment campaign for foster care and supported lodgings. This was a with a view to broadening placement options and reducing the need for agency placements and there were a number of people who progressed to assessment from this activity, which continues.

Placement Services

Placement Services comprises Fostering, Adoption, Kinship, Supported Lodgings, Continuing Care and Throughcare & Aftercare.

The Fostering Service experienced a decrease in the number of foster carers from 41 to 34. This was a decrease of 17% and reflected the national challenges in recruiting and retaining foster carers following the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the Fostering Service developed a Marketing Plan and Business Plan in 2022/23. This was an evidence based approach which resulted in a more targeted foster carer/supported lodgings recruitment campaign.

The Adoption Service undertook assessments which resulted in approval of adoptive carers and four young people achieved legal permanence by each being made subject to a Permanence Order with Authority to Adopt.

In Kinship Care the number of kinship household moved from 36 to 30 which was a decrease of 20%. Linked with this, the number of kinship placements formalised via a legal order moved from 33 to 38 which was an increase of 15%. This indicates that a number of kinship placements successfully move on to legal orders securing the placements for those young people.

In Supported Lodgings the number of households moved from 5 to 4 where the number of being offered placements increased from 5 to 6. This reflected a move by Supported Lodgings carers to provide more than one placement. As with the Fostering Service a Marketing Plan and Business Plan was developed in 2022/23

which resulted in a more targeted foster carer/supported lodgings recruitment campaign.

In Continuing Care the number of placements increased from 2 to 5, providing young people with placement stability and continuity as they transition into adulthood.

Unaccompanied children and young people seeking asylum

In 2022/23 there was an increase in the number of children seeking safety and asylum in Scotland (UASC) supported by Placement Services via the National Transfer Scheme. The number of young people increased from 1 to 8 and were accommodated in Supported Lodgings or within Moray Council's housing supported by staff from Throughcare & Aftercare services.



The Promise

During this period developments were focussed on keeping The Promise to Moray's children and young people. The importance of having invested into services that help prevent children from entering the care system, by providing evidence based interventions that effectively help families find solutions to the things causing family breakdown cannot be underestimated. The outcome and impact from this work is yet to be established, however, it was an important step towards developing a different approach to Moray's work alongside children and their families.

We worked as partners towards meeting the commitments of our Children's Services Plan and worked jointly to begin creating the new Children's Services Plan incorporating Moray's Promise Plan to take us up to 2026.

Areas identified for improvement centred on assessment and joint planning. There continues to be a need to reduce the amount of children entering the care system and a focus on how many placement moves children experience. There is also a focus on how we endeavour to keep children together with their brothers and sisters.

During this period we also developed Moray's Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) team. This was a pan-Grampian project to ensure that when children and young people were victims or witnesses of a crime, that the way they are interviewed is consistent (Across Scotland) and is trauma informed at its centre. This has moved

much of the Joint Investigative Interview work of the Access Team to the Grampian SCIM team. The SCIM social workers for Moray remain based in Moray.

Justice Services and Youth Justice

Justice services supported 373 requests for criminal justice social work reports which converted into 262 community payback orders over the reporting period. The service was able to provide some bespoke and creative supports to people who need it the most including 6 people who were released from prison on statutory measures and 17 who were offered support through voluntary measures. At the end of reporting period there were 87 individuals subject to MAPPA in the community.

The service is working to an improvement plan in relation to a National Diversion Review which Moray Justice Services formed part of. Work has been undertaken to review the process and paperwork used and new files have been created to ensure the standards set are met. There have been a variety of training opportunities available to both Youth Justice and Justice Social work including Outcomes Star which will be primarily used in diversion from prosecution and structured deferred sentences. It is anticipated this tool will allow for improved evidence of outcomes and effectiveness of interventions whilst also hearing the voice more clearly from individuals in the service.

Justice Social Work has also undertaken training in trauma informed report writing and in relation to the new Throughcare Assessment for Release on Licence report which is co-produced with prison based social work. Both teams have the majority of staff now trained in Safe and Together and undertaken Child Protection training.

Within the Unpaid Work service, a Placement Projects Task Supervisor was recruited and a drive to increase the availability of placements for individuals completing hours of unpaid work. There are now placements available in East, West and Central Moray and supportive 1:1 placements are being progressed for individuals who are more vulnerable with complex needs. The Unpaid Work team continue to provide a service to the whole of Moray and recipient feedback for this work has been overwhelmingly positive. The team is currently working in partnership with Moray Food Plus in the growing and distribution of fresh produce to the local community.

The bail supervision process is embedding locally and there were eight bail supervisions overseen in this period. This has allowed an opportunity for early intervention work to take place and early identification of support needs.

There are a number of interventions used aimed at reducing reoffending including structured programme work targeting particular offences, for example, sexual or

domestic offending and 1:1 work to increase individuals understanding of their pathways to offending and the impact of this on them and the wider community. In addition to this there has been the development of group work for both men and women within Justice Social Work, aimed at meeting the wider needs of individuals and supporting community based activities. The purpose of this has been to improve the mental wellbeing of individuals within the service and overcome barriers to accessing services for longer term support.

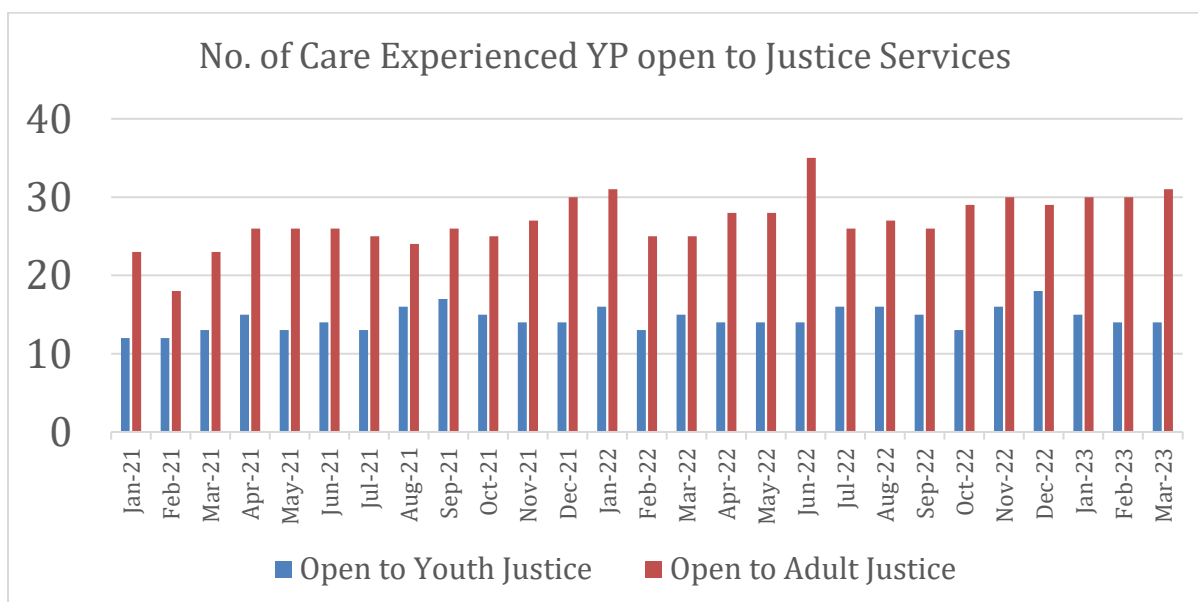
There is also a good partnership representation at the Community Justice Strategic Partnership group and a focus on improving outcomes in Moray. The Lead Officer for the group retired this year and a new officer recruited, allowing for the work of the group to continue with energy.

Youth Justice

Referrals to Youth Justice Services have been consistent in numbers, with the following recorded.

Q1 – 1 st April – 30 th June 2022
16 New referrals to Youth Justice for support and guidance during this period – 68 young people engaged with Service
Q2 – 1 st July – 30 th September 2022
21 New referrals to Youth Justice for support and guidance during this period - 69 young people engaged with Service
Q3 - 1 st October – 31 st December 2022
21 New referrals to Youth Justice for support and guidance during this period - 57 young people engaged with Service
Q4 – 1 st January – 31 st March 2023
20 New referrals to Youth Justice for support and guidance during this period 62 young people engaged with Service

Of these 78 referrals into Youth Justice over the last year. Work has been undertaken to improve the identification of those with care experience within both adult and youth justice services to ensure that additional supports are offered in terms of any identified needs, including mental wellbeing, alongside supporting them to reduce any further offending. During this period there has been an average of 33% of open cases are care experienced young people within Youth Justice and an average of 10% open to Justice Services as a whole. There remains a continued commitment to reducing the number of care experienced young people open to Justice Services. Youth Justice have additionally been trained in the new 'Our Family Story' assessment framework.



Referrals

Justice Social Work

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
35 (9.4%)	27 (7.1%)	29 (8%)	31 (8%)

Youth Justice

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
14 (31%)	15 (33.3%)	18 (39%)	14 (29%)

Both

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
49 (11.8%)	42 (9.9%)	47 (11.6%)	45 (10.4%)

REFERRALS (% Care experienced individual)

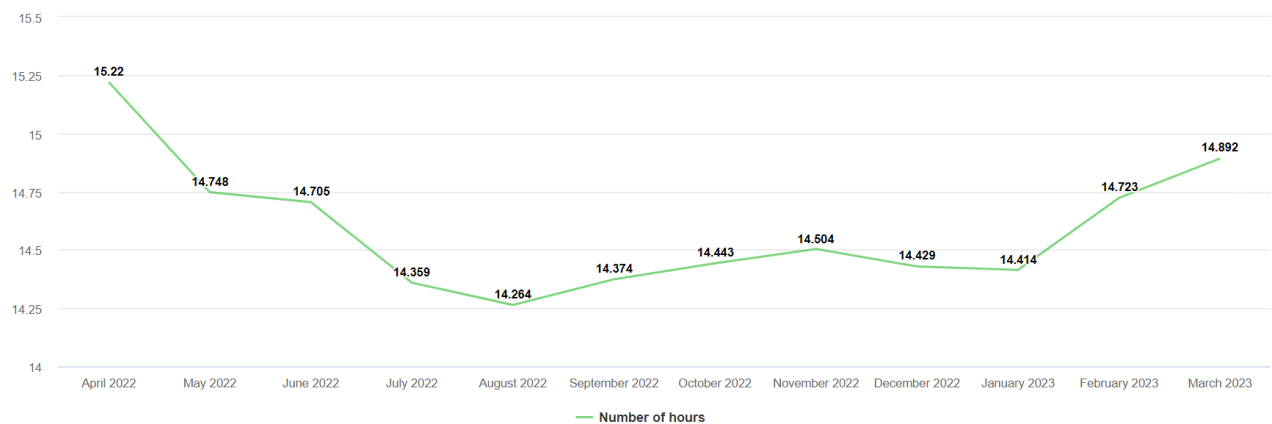
Adults

Challenges were keenly felt across adult services, with the pressures of delayed hospital discharge continuing. There are many examples of staff pulling together to find creative solutions to support system change.

There were 2,041 referrals to adult social work area teams in 22/23 down by 9.4% in comparison with the 21/22 number of 2,233. Additionally there were 1,645 police concern reports which is a rise of just over 300 from the previous year.

Care at home continues to have challenges to recruitment and retention and increasing need is not reflective of increasing workforce. Social workers are working often with reduced team sizes and the complexity and number of people requiring support increases. At the end of the year there were 130 people awaiting a package of care. Of those waiting for care, 9% were in hospital.

Average number of hours of care per person



There are 14 care homes in Moray and there were 30 people waiting for a place in a care home at the end of March this year. Of those 14 were in the community, 11 were in hospital and 5 were in interim care home placements.

As part of the System Pressures two week challenge, the Chief Social Work Officer along with other key leadership staff from within Health and Social Care Moray undertook the Day of Care Survey for all hospital patients in Moray, including those in community hospitals. As well as performing the Day of Care Survey, the team took the opportunity to carry out qualitative interviews with staff to understand from an operational perspective the pressure teams are under and to find barriers and possible solutions to the flow of patients through our systems in Moray.

This exercise gave the partnership an insight into some of the challenges, as well as a clearer idea of the extent of delayed discharge. 72% of those in community hospital did not meet the criteria for being in a community hospital and 34% of those in Dr Gray's Hospital did not meet the criteria.

This provided an opportunity to create a plan of action, which is ongoing, to address some of the key findings of that audit. The issue of finding resource to increase care at home or care home places is not one that can be resolved easily or quickly, but

the model of social work and social care and working in partnership with colleagues across health services are where transformative changes can take place.

Our commissioned services had an external audit completed within the reporting period and related improvement plan created which allowed for some progress to be made in addressing contracts that were out of date. This presented as a risk to the partnership and the action plan allowed for focus on areas which were not being progressed. A number of key processes are now in place to allow the monitoring of contacts and escalation to Practice Governance Board should risks increase to this area of work.

Work is ongoing to progress action around our mental health services in Moray. There was a requirement to improve the inpatient experience and safety for people, making the environment trauma informed, ligature safe and the ward fit for purpose. This requirement sat alongside the need to do work in the hospital site for an MRI scanner and a Programme Board was set up to plan and co-ordinate both these significant pieces of work in conjunction. These plans are still ongoing and in progress and hopefully within the next reporting period some of the necessary works will have commenced.

Mental Health Officers (MHO)

It can be a challenge for the MHO workforce in meeting statutory duties due to limited capacity and MHOs work exceptionally hard to provide a high quality service. In Moray there is no dedicated team and most MHOs have an established post in addition to their MHO duties. A workforce analysis showed that two MHOs should be trained each year to compensate for MHOs retiring or ceasing to undertake MHO work due to promotions or other workforce changes.

Two Mental Health Officers (MHOs) qualified in 2019, for a number of reasons we had no MHO candidates in 20-21 but encouragingly there were two qualified in 2022 and there are currently two MHO candidates in training who will qualify towards the end of 2023. However it is possible retirements will feature in the near future given the age profile of MHOs, with 5 being over the age of 60 (see Table 1) and some considering retirement.

Table 1

MHOs	≤25	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65+
Female	0	0	0	1	5	1	2	1	4	0
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0
Total	0	0	0	0	5	1	2	3	5	0

The number of Compulsory Treatment Orders and Compulsion Orders have continued to decline. However the number of people requiring detention under a short term certificate has risen by 21% (16 people) on previous year. This may reflect that there are more people requiring hospital treatment but for shorter periods of time. There was less use of Emergency Detention Certificates (decrease of 48% - 11 people) to detain and more use of Short Term Detention Certificates as the gateway to mental health treatment which reflects good practice.

Adults with Incapacity

Guardianship and intervention order referrals (requests for MHO reports) have increased significantly between 2020 and 2023. Number of referrals for 2021-2022 was 74, a 23% increase on previous year and a 90% increase on 2019/20. In 2022-2023 referrals have again increased by 7% on previous year.

A grant to increase MHO capacity was allocated in 2021 and 2022 to each local authority from Scottish Government. In Moray an Advanced Practitioner was recruited and attached to the Mental Health Team. In addition to writing MHO reports for guardianship and intervention orders, the post holder also participates in the Mental Health Act rota, delivers AWI awareness training, supports delayed discharges for people waiting for guardianship, chairs AWI meetings, participates in auditing and improvement work and gives advice to teams on good practice. The MHO capacity grant allowed the recruitment of a social worker in the Mental Health Team to release more capacity for the MHOs covering the Mental Health Act rota in the team.

Since being in post the post holder completed 23 guardianship reports by end March 2023. Because of this increased capacity there was a reduction in the waiting list for guardianship applications from 26 to 10.

At end of March 2023 there were 50 welfare guardianships granted.

Team	Learning Disability team	West Community Care team	East Community Care team	Mental Health/ Drug and Alcohol	Total
Number of LA guardianships	24	15	6	5	50

Quality Assurance

In September 2021 the Mental Welfare Commission published their report Care and Treatment for people with alcohol related brain damage (ARBD) in Scotland. One of the findings was that not everyone on a local authority guardianship had a delegated guardian or if they did they did not receive regular visits or reviews.

Each H&SCP were required to have an improvement plan. The delegated guardian audit took place in 2022 and arises from that plan.

The following improvements are in progress:

- Delegated guardian audit and audit report produced, feedback to teams.
- AWI improvement plan developed
- Delegated guardian training being developed
- Guidance for delegated guardians and their manager in progress
- Review of templates and forms taken place, development of a 13ZA decision-making proforma.

Learning Disability

Our services to those with Learning Disability were also subject to changes in management, as the outgoing Service Manager retired and a new Service Manager and Team Manager recruited into their new roles. Our Learning Disability services tend to be an area of high spend and as such Quality Assurance and robust planning have been important.

Approximately 450 people with a Learning Disability are supported and receive a wide spectrum of services from a multi-disciplinary team, to promote their safety, health and wellbeing, and ensure that they have access to full and independent lives.

Housing has been an area of significant development within the service over the past 3 years. 22-23 has seen the building of the Greenfield Circle project, in partnership with Springfield property developers and Hanover Housing Association, creating suitable housing options for people with a Learning Disability. The service is to continue its work on further housing projects to help accommodate people who still live with parents or who want to move from supported living to live independently.

In addition, there is an internal provision, Woodview, which offers independent living to vulnerable adults who have complex and challenging needs and we plan to increase our provision in this area. This is in response to the 'Coming Home Report' and subsequent Scottish Government directive to ensure that those in inappropriate, out of area placements, are supported in a return to Moray. There are currently 6 people who are in hospital or live out of area that will be supported back to Moray over the following year.

The Transition Workers within the Health and Social Care Partnership are linked into the Children and Families Disability Pod, ensuring that planning for young adults begins at the earliest possible opportunity.

Our Community Learning Disability Service has also experienced challenges in recruiting into vacant posts, particularly within Social Work and Psychiatry however the team have worked exceptionally hard to provide continuous support to people despite the aforementioned challenges around Covid and recovery.

Adult Protection Committee

The adult protection committee meets each quarter – chaired by the new Independent Chair of both Adult and Child Protection Committees.

The training offered by APC is extended to the wider workforce within Moray Council, the Health and Social Care Partnership, Care Homes, Care Providers and the third and community sector. Training and Development to raise awareness of Adult Protection and how to make a referral allows the vision of the APC to be shared across a wide audience.

In relation to training and development for Social Workers and Council Officers the Adult Support and Protection Training Facilitator delivers a range of sessions throughout the year. These include;

- Adult Support and Protection Modules 1-4
- What to expect from a Case Conference
- Hoarding and Self-Neglect
- Risk Assessment and Risk Management

The training delivered is documented within Health and Social Care Moray's ASP Training Plan which provides information and guidance for employees across the Health and Social Care Partnership. The document aligns with the wider Protecting Adults in Grampian – A Learning and Development Strategic Framework and enables the reader to identify their workforce contact with regard to Adult Support and Protection and request appropriate training.

The Council Officer Forum – first established in December 2021 meets on a 6-weekly basis and continues to offer a reflective space for Council Officers to meet and discuss emerging issues, learning and development, practice, and changes to guidance for example, as well as being kept up to date with National Events and news. Topics that have been covered include

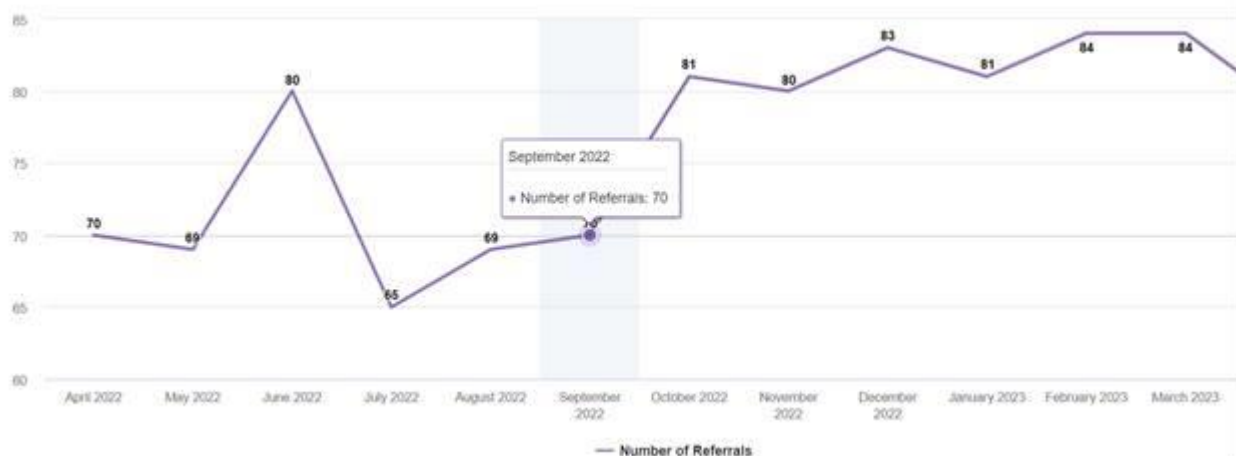
- The New Revised Codes of Practice in Adult Support and Protection
- Trauma informed Practice

- Domestic Abuse and the role of MARAC
- Participation in Case Conferences
- Moray's Interagency Vulnerable Adults Process
- Public Protection areas including Community Justice Partnership, Child Protection and Drugs and Alcohol Partnership

Adult Support and Protection

A total of 917 Adult Support and Protection referrals have been received from April 2022 – March 2023. This is an increase on last year's figures of 557. It is apparent that the last few months appear to have remained fairly static with regard to referrals with between 81-84 with the highest rate reported in February and March this year. A further breakdown of these figures is below

HSCM Adult Support & Protection - Number of referrals received in previous month-



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The advent of Moray's Interagency Vulnerable Adults Procedure has been a particular area of good practice. This Procedure is a proactive and preventative work stream. This allows for cases of concern which do not meet the Adult Protection 3-point criteria to be discussed on an inter-agency basis to look at ways to further support the adult at the centre. This process does not replace any Adult Support and Protection activity, it is expected that the established procedure is followed for this.

Challenges and improvements

There remains to be a bedding in period of the new CSWO and a need to develop further processes to have robust oversight and data scrutiny that spans across all Social Work Services. A data dashboard is under development for Children and Families Social Work, and, if this meets the need of providing easy to read information, then it can be replicated in adult services. There will be a need to begin

the process of replacing the current case management system over the next year as the contract expires.

Resources are undoubtedly reducing in contrast to increasing need and transformation across all service areas is critical to ensure the ability to continue to support those who most need it, to achieve improving outcomes and to create good quality of life for people who come into contact with Social Work and Social Care systems.

There has been a growing need to work closely as partner's both across Moray and the wider Grampian area and take learning from other areas. Some of the challenges faced this year have been the situation in Ukraine and related sponsorship of families coming to live in Moray and an increase in people seeking asylum, including unaccompanied young people under the age of 18. We have had to be flexible in a way that we haven't previously and come together to ensure vulnerable people are supported effectively, which was achieved through partnership working.

Children and Families Social Work transformation plan centred on a Pod model, moving to a locality based social work. This process has begun with the creation of a Disability Pod, allowing for support to children with disabilities to be delivered in a more focussed way, having moved this from within the children and families team work. An evaluation of this will take place within the next reporting period, along with further Pod development.

The new partnership Children's Services Plan will incorporate Moray's Child Poverty Plan, the Promise Plan and the Corporate Parenting Plan, alongside the Rights and Participation Plan and provide an opportunity for some clear and streamlined work to take place to meet the priorities the plan agrees. The children's services partnership in Moray is growing in strength and the governance processes were all developed over the last year allowing for some real progress to be made in this area.

Resources

There are financial pressures in all areas of service delivery. There are some government investments and funding opportunities offered across the whole system, but fundamentally, core services do not form part of what is being financially supported, in the main. When savings have to be found, there is a real risk that in order to manage a budget deficit the cuts to public services only serve to cost more money in the long run as we learn where the critical thresholds for spend sit in relation to vulnerable citizens.

The Whole Family Wellbeing Fund is a welcome support to early and effective interventions and create transformation, particularly linked to The Promise. The

outcome of that investment may take time to come to fruition but in the interim, there remains a growing need to provide support, including financial support to families in need across Moray. The Whole Family Wellbeing Fund in Moray will look to increase capacity and offer intensive support to families at an earlier point.

There is a significant challenge to trying to create transformation when budgets are reducing and there are staffing vacancies. So less people to do more work with less resources creates a real and present challenge to achieving positive outcomes for those seeking support from our services.

The risks to budget reductions to all services remain high, but there are increasing costs and increasing need in Children and Families Social Work, Care at Home and Adult Learning Disability Services in particular. The cost of care is also increasing and this creates a dynamic where the ability to do things differently is compromised by the need to fund and support expensive and at times, existing placements for those who need it.

Going forward, Moray has projected growth in the number of older adults living in the area and a reduction in the number of young people. This creates a potential issue for the future in terms of providing care to an aging population. We also have a number of adults with learning disabilities who live with elderly parents, and this will create a need for more support as we go forward into the next three years. It has been particularly pertinent to ensure that the reliance on expensive out of area placements for children and for adults with learning disabilities is reduced and that where possible internal provisions can offer best value with high quality services.

The work achieved in changing the practice model in Children's Social Work is ongoing, but has created savings. The need to ensure practice is safe and robust and that the focus and priority is on keeping children and young people with their families where possible has meant that expensive out of area and external placements have reduced. There is hope to see further savings as we embed the two newly commissioned services to help us achieve our goals in that area.

Future concerns remain that reductions to budgets will continue and the risk of overspending remains high. As outlined previously, need is growing in Moray, as with other areas of Scotland and the workforce reducing also.

Moray also has a limited number of third sector and community organisations and there is a low presence of social care agencies to enable good competitive and ethical commissioning practices.

Adult Social Work and Social Care	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m
Total Budget	49.6	58.5	60.4

Services for Children, Young People & Families	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m
Total Budget	19.383	19.791	18.334
Justice Services	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m	2022/23 £m
Total Budget	-0.106	-0.106	-0.109

Workforce

Number of front line social work posts:

Adult Services: 40.31 FTE

Children and Families: 54.72 FTE

Justice: 13.5 FTE

There have been a number of challenges to the recruitment and retention of staff across most areas of social work as aforementioned. There has been a national movement of staff from Children and Families Social Work into other areas of social work or indeed people leaving the profession altogether. Our Social Care staff numbers have been positive in terms of recruitment but not so strong in the area of retention, with people moving on to other better paid positions outside of the caring profession with challenges in ensuring staff have the support and training they require are also contributors to people in social care moving on.

A lot of work has been undertaken to help people feel Moray is an attractive opportunity, but there have been a number of hard to fill positions that we have had to absorb as part of our contingency management to ensure the continued running of services.

There have also been a number of sickness absences that have further contributed to an already pressured situation and the related task of sickness management by managers who already covering a number of vacancies.

Staff wellbeing has undoubtedly been impacted and at times, teams have been asked to cover other areas of social work to help minimise the risks to critical parts of the Social Work system.

Service Managers attend the Workforce and Resources sub-group of Social Work Scotland Children and Families' Standing Committee and we have spoken with universities about what steps we may take in ensuring we are looking to the future for new graduates of social work and how these posts can be secured in Moray.

There are plans to look at how we encourage other staff to train as social workers and how we stretch or reach of adverts wider than the traditional forms of advertising, e.g. LinkedIn.

We are in the process of recruiting a trauma informed lead for our partnership stretching across both adult and children's services and so we hope going forward we can develop some strategies in relation to increasing resilience and wellbeing of our workforce.

Training, Learning and Development

Children and Families and Justice Social Work created and delivered child protection training for all social work staff. A large focus of this training was on the rollout of the National Child Protection Guidance 2021 to ensure social workers were well briefed and understood how the new guidance related to their practice. The plan was to implement this training every two years in order that social workers working with complex child protection cases had the training and a refresher regularly.

As the year went on, it became clear that the child protection training needed to change going forward, to ensure that all practitioners understood the core elements of recognising and responding to risk using good assessment skills and clear, SMART planning and partnership working. The new child protection training is currently under development and will be rolled out across all aspects of Social Work following evaluation of delivery to Children and Families' Social Work. Consideration will also be given to ensuring it is developed to enable partners to access this training.

In recognising the need to better develop how assessments were completed and to ensure that this was anchored to the national model, new assessment paperwork was developed to help address a number of things. Firstly, it is a relational model ensuring that the assessment is done alongside children and their families. Secondly, it attempts to reduce the multiple assessment formats that were being used across the service and simplify this for staff, to ensure that time was spent with families rather than on completing lengthy documents that did not serve to create better assessments. This paperwork was designed to support families themselves to better understand the areas where support was needed and what they could expect from Social Workers to help achieve those goals.

In the dates between April 2022 and April 2023, the following training has been received by staff in Moray's Children & Family's Social Work Service:

Safe and Together

The multi-agency rollout of Safe and Together has been ongoing during this period and over 70 staff members attended the four day CORE sessions, since they were launched in Nov 2022. In total, 28% staff members are now licenced to use the tool with a further 37% scheduled to be trained by summer 2023. A multi-agency Safe and Together Overview day was also delivered in Feb 2023. A total of six staff members are trained as trainers with another staff member finishing the training course by the end of November 2023.

Safer Sleep

The multi-agency Safer Sleep training delivered by the Cot Death Trust in Feb 23, was attended by 55% of children and families social work staff, with a further sweep up scheduled for Jun 23 where there is an anticipated further 10% to be captured. This training was specifically in relation to Sudden and Unexplained Death of an Infant and gave staff a good understanding of potential causes, as well as how to interact with families who may face this awful situation.

4x4x4 Supervision Model

Children & Families social work use the 4x4x4 supervision model, with a supervision policy in place to reflect this. 77% of the expected workforce have attended this training in the reporting period.

Our Family Story

Within children and families social work, the newly created assessment paperwork 'Our Family Story' was introduced. This was rolled out in the beginning of 2023 and to date, 59% of staff have received training in relation to its use. A further 20% will be captured in the sweep-up training over the summer of 2023.

Solution-Orientated Practice/Meetings

Moray has embraced the multi-agency use of Solution-Orientated Practice/Meetings. This way of working ties in directly with child protection planning meetings, and the Our Family Story assessment. 59% of staff are familiar with this model, to date, with a further 20% scheduled to be trained over the summer. Furthermore, a number of social work staff will become trainers in the model to ensure personnel are adequately supported and training continues with a turnover of staffing.

Graded Care Profile 2

As of January 2023, the initial stages of GCP2 implementation began. This multi-agency tool will be rolled out across all children's services and the implementation plan is in place with 20 members of staff across the area scheduled to become trainers later in the year.

Alongside the training above, there have been a number of learning and development sessions where staff are invited to hear more about certain subjects, or further develop their skills. These have included topics such as Child Protection Planning Meetings, SCIM, Functional Family Therapy and Family Group Decision Making. There are also 'whole department service learning' opportunities on an 8-weekly basis for the CSWO to convey any important L&D points. In between these, staff are encouraged to use these sessions in a way they direct to help them with identified learning and development needs.

Learning Reviews – Children's Services

Notifications of cases to be considered for a review are made to Child Protection Committee (CPC) Case Review sub-group. The sub-group follow the National Guidance for Child Protection Committees Undertaking Learning Reviews to consider and make a recommendation about whether to proceed to a full Learning Review. When a Learning Review is recommended by this group a report is submitted to the CPC for agreement. The National Guidance is then followed and subsequent progress is reported to the CPC through the subgroup.

Between April 2022 and March 2023 there was one formal notification to the subgroup for their consideration. There were three learning reviews ongoing at this time and it was felt that enough information had been gathered to identify overarching themes that reflect what we already know and what we need to improve on in Moray. Furthermore there are some plans in place to address the key themes and issues.

The case review sub-group also consider all national Learning Reviews in the context of any multiagency learning that can be taken from these. The group supports reflective discussion about these cases and considered any gaps within our own structures and systems across the multi-agency in relation to the learning outcomes and recommendations from these reviews.

Learning Reviews – Adults

Notifications of cases to be reviewed are made using the Grampian Learning Review Procedures. Learning from Case Reviews is a standing item at each APC with the intended outcome of continuous improvement through reflection on day to day

practice and systems. On receiving notification, the Learning Review sub-group of the APC is required to meet to discuss and recommend a course of action to the APC.

Between April 2022 and March 2023, 2 cases have been discussed within the Learning Review sub-group.

- 1 did not meet the criteria for Learning Review
- 1 case did, however, due to challenges in progression and time lapsed it was agreed that it will take the guise of a detailed timeline with recommendations brought to APC for further discussion and dissemination.

Learning from reviews comes not only from undertaking local case reviews, but also having oversight of case review nationally. A Grampian-wide External Learning Review Group enables discussion and reflection on case reviews from other areas of Scotland which is then passed to APCs and Chief Officers Groups (for example Angus' Adult 018 Report). This has proved to be exceptionally useful with learning disseminated via Council Officer Forums.

Looking ahead

Going forward there are a number of key areas that require ongoing development. Work will be ongoing to keep The Promise in Children's Services and beyond and using the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund work with partners to deliver holistic intensive family support to a number of families as a pilot project will come to fruition.

The implementation of the Children's Services Plan as a partnership to focus on the priority areas will be key. Work will continue to develop staff skills in relation to the assessment of risk and multi-agency planning. In Adult Services there will be the implementation of the plan arising from the Day of Care Audit and developments in relation to the Adult Support and Protection improvement plan.

Looking forward over the coming year there are a number of key posts which will hopefully be filled allowing the capacity to further develop and improve across Adult and Children's Social Work. In Justice Services, work will be ongoing to ensure diversionary activity is achieving good outcomes and support for men with mental wellbeing issues in particular will be a focus.

Work will continue on the development of a secure care procedure document which will incorporate the secure care standards. This will ensure a consistent, trauma informed process for young people who might meet secure care criteria. A young people support and protection procedure is also in development to support older young people up to adulthood and those who experience extra-familial harm or who are a risk to themselves or others. To stay true to Moray's Promise, this procedure will focus on the needs of young people rather than solely on age.

Overall, efforts will continue to offer support to all people who require it, at the earliest opportunity.



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Chief Social Work Officer and Head of Service

