



Birmingham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Newsletter

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MASH Progress—5 Months Since Go-Live

It has been over 5 months since Birmingham MASH launched on 28th July 2014. At the MASH Roadshows that took place in the lead up to Go-Live the concept of the MASH model was outlined—a fully integrated and co-located multi-agency team. This is in place with Birmingham City Council Children’s Services, Police, Health and Women’s Aid workers all located in the MASH team at the City Council Lancaster Circus office. We also have a rota of schools representatives in MASH, and Housing and Probation are about to join the team. In addition the fCAF team have changed role to become an Early Help & Brokerage Service.

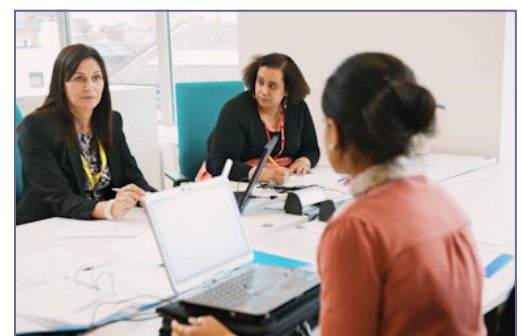
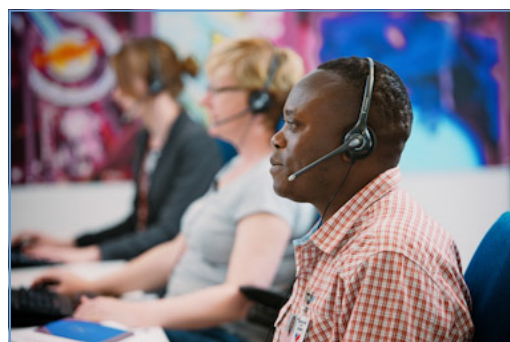
MASH receives referrals for children believed to be at risk of significant harm, including domestic abuse. Each agency within the MASH has access to their own systems and shares information as appropriate with key partners. This enables partners to gain a much more timely and comprehensive understanding of the current situation, together with any relevant historical information.

As stated at the MASH Roadshows, MASH is fully embedded within

Birmingham’s ‘Right Service Right Time’ needs model. The key determination is that MASH is here to respond to all additional needs and complex/significant needs.

As the MASH matures, it has faced increasing volumes of demand, and whilst the increased demand has brought its pressures it also demonstrates that partner agencies feel confident in sharing their concerns with the MASH. We are fully aware of the frustrations some people are experiencing when dealing with delays in MASH, as a result of the increase in demand. However, the evidence demonstrates that children at risk of significant harm are now being protected in a more timely and appropriate way.

During December Lord Warner presented his second letter to the Minister for Scrutiny and publically praised MASH for the difference it is making. He states children are, “safer,” but the whole service is still not safe. Similarly the Kerslake report cited MASH as a good example of partnership working.





Multi-Agency Commissioning

Options for multi-agency commissioning for the MASH function are being considered. Several meetings have taken place, chaired by the BCC Strategic Director for People, with Health Chief Executives and Police Commanders to review the demand/capacity around MASH. As demonstrated in the table below, since MASH has gone live there has been a significant increase in demand, with a 40% increase in Section 47s and children

on Child Protection plans.

A timeline has been agreed for a firm commitment from partners on resourcing on a secure, sustainable footing the future of MASH, including future proofing, flex, and implications for the social work teams in the localities.

Future communications will provide an update on development. Key milestones will be reached in January 2015 and April 2015.

		Pre MASH	Post MASH	% Shift
Calls		6,071	8,256	↑ 2,185 35.9%
Contacts		10,369	12,585	↑ (2216) 21%
Referrals		6,734	7,164	↑ (430) 6%
Sec 47	Number (over a 4 month period)	917	1,353	↑ (436) 40%
	Mean average per day	10.5	14.7	↑ (4.2) 40%
Child Protection Plans		863	1083	↑ 220 + 25%

Right Service Right Time Roadshows

In the lead up to the launch of MASH on 28th July 2014, almost 3,000 people attended roadshows to find out more about Birmingham MASH. These sessions were very positive and provided useful challenge and feedback that has been taken on board as part of the MASH development.

A commitment was made to run another series of roadshows to provide an update on the progress of MASH. Roadshow sessions are being planned to run at Tally Ho in Edgbaston in the first quarter of this year.

These roadshows will have a wider remit as 'Right Service Right Time' roadshows. The Birmingham 'Right Service Right Time' needs model is being refreshed and the roadshows will cover all the different pathways into accessing support for vulnerable children in Birmingham, including MASH.

Keep an eye out for communications regarding the upcoming roadshow dates, and you will be able to book your place on a roadshow session via the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board website - <http://www.lscbbirmingham.org.uk/>

New Multi-Agency Referral Form

A key component in MASH decision making is the quality of referral information that is shared when referrals are made. Whilst overall there are signs that the quality of referrals is improving recent audit of cases showed the difficulty in making robust decisions where this referral information was poor.

Work has been undertaken to improve the design and guidance around the Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF).

The new form has been approved by Birmingham Safeguarding Children

Board, and will be circulated week commencing 19th January 2015. Partners will be asked to start using the form from the 2nd February to ensure they have a two week notice period. Partners will also be contacted with a briefing pack on the new form which includes guidance, example of what good and bad referrals look like, and a short presentation about why we have a new MARF and the benefits of the new form for users .

There will be a series of engagement activities in January and February to promote the new MARF including targeted communications for partners.

See For Yourself

We are keen that as many people as possible visit MASH to get a 'hands on' feel of how we operate, and how assessment decisions are made.

During our first few months we have had some very interested and distinguished visitors as the word about MASH has spread:

- Matthew Rycroft, appointed as UK Permanent Ambassador to the United Nations

- Mark Langdale, Lead for UK Government at EC Harris
- Mark Sedwill, Permanent Secretary at the Home Office

So why don't you and your team think about a visit? Contact Project.MASH@birmingham.gov.uk to arrange.



Contact MASH

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) provides a single point of contact for professionals and members of the public who want to seek support or raise concerns about a child.

Call MASH on 0121 303 1888 for a professional conversation, followed up by submitting a Multi-Agency Referral Form (MARF) emailed to MASH@birmingham.gov.uk or

Secure.MASH@birmingham.gcsx.gov.uk.

The MARF can be accessed via the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board website, where you can also find out more information about MASH - <http://www.lscbbirmingham.org.uk/>.

You can also contact Project.MASH@birmingham.gov.uk if you have any general queries or feedback.