



## Expert Group

### Improving mental health and emotional wellbeing support for children and young people in care

#### Terms of Reference

##### 1. Overview of the project

- 1.1 The overall aim of the project is to ensure that the emotional and mental health needs of children and young people in care, adopted from care, and care leavers are better met. The aspiration is that in the future looked after children will have access to high quality services, based on a clear assessment of need, from a range of professionals working across agencies.
- 1.2 The project will involve developing:
  - Care pathways – focussing on the journey that a child or young person in need of support might make
  - Models of care – the organisation and configuration of services to ensure the provision of appropriate evidence-based interventions
  - Quality principles – clear statements and measures that set out an achievable marker of high-quality and effective care.
  - Implementation plans and products to support the use of the care pathways, models of care and quality principles.
- 1.3 The project outputs will be delivered by October 2017.

##### 2. The Expert Group - overview

- 2.1 The Expert Group's role is advisory. Throughout the project, the Expert Group will:
  - Consider the best available evidence to assist in developing the care pathways, models of care and quality principles
  - Make recommendations, identify priorities, and advise on the assumptions being made in the development of the products
  - Advise on how to identify best practice in areas where evidence is absent or weak

- Advise on any opportunities and challenges in implementing the product to ensure that they are as useful and as relevant as possible to end users – and in particular, children and young people
  - Review drafts and agree the final products.
- 2.2 SCIE is the secretariat for the Expert Group. This means that SCIE’s project team locate and provide evidence on current research and practice for the EG’s deliberation, as well as organising the practicalities around each meeting.
- 2.3 SCIE is responsible for producing the final care pathways, models of care and quality principles, but the Expert Group will be collectively responsible for its recommendations.

### **3. Expert Group – membership**

- 3.1 The Expert Group is co-chaired by Peter Fonagy and Alison O’Sullivan.
- 3.2 The Expert Group consists of around 30 members including:
- 20 representatives from across the health, social care, education and voluntary and community sector;
  - Four young people with experience of being in care;
  - Six frontline professionals.
- 3.3 The Expert Group comprises nominated representatives from key stakeholder organisations identified by the Department of Health and frontline practitioners and young people recruited by SCIE.
- 3.4 The members of the Expert Group have experience and knowledge of services and issues relating to the support of children and young people in care, adopted from care and care leavers with mental health and wellbeing needs. Appropriate support will be provided to support young people on the Expert Group to participate, and in case of any concerns arising from discussing sensitive issues.
- 3.5 Expert Group members add value to the group because of their individual skills, experience and knowledge. Members are not expected to represent their specific organisation’s or sector’s perspective.
- 3.6 Expert witnesses may be invited to the Expert Group meetings on specific topics and can be drawn from a wide range of areas as appropriate. They are invited to present their evidence in the form of expert testimony and are asked to provide a written paper or summary of their evidence. They also help the Expert Group to consider and interpret the evidence.

#### **4. Supporting documents**

- 4.1 More information on the expectations of the co-chairs and members, and Standing Orders can be found in the appendix.
- 4.2 More information on the scope of the Expert Group can be found in the project scope document which has been developed by SCIE and will be discussed and agreed at the first Expert Group meeting.

# Appendix A: Roles and responsibilities

## 1. The Expert Group co-chairs

- 1.1 The co-chairs ensure that the Expert Group takes full account of the evidence in developing recommendations and considers the analysis and interpretation of the evidence prepared by the evidence review team.
- 1.2 To facilitate the effective working of the Expert Group, the co-chairs:
  - Ensure that all members have their voices heard and their experience and expertise respected
  - Encourage constructive debate without forcing consensus
  - Steer the discussions according to the agenda, ensuring progress is made
  - Keep the group discussions unified and discourage disruption or dominance by any members
  - Summarise the main points and key discussions from the debate
  - Ensure that Expert Group members declare any new conflicts of interest that have arisen and handle any conflicts as they arise
  - Sign off meeting minutes once approved by the Expert Group
  - Together with SCIE ensure effective agenda planning to maintain momentum of the work within agreed timescales
- 1.3 The co-chairs also offers members, on an annual basis, feedback and comment on their contribution for revalidation purposes or personal development.

## 2. All Expert Group members

- 2.1 Expert Group members are expected to:
  - Review and abide by the Terms of Reference and standing orders set out in this document.
  - Contribute constructively to meetings and have good communication and team-working skills; this should include a commitment to considering the needs of people using services, family members and carers.
  - Use their background knowledge and experience of the topic to advise SCIE on the best available evidence
  - Read all relevant documentation and make constructive comments and proposals at (and between) Expert Group meetings.
  - Work with other members of the Expert Group to develop the products based on the best available

- Help ensure that the products as a whole, are worded sensitively (for example, that people using services or population groups are treated as people, not as objects of assessments or interventions).
- Advise SCIE on how to identify best practice in areas for which research evidence is absent, weak or equivocal.
- Consider, with other members of the Expert Group, the feasibility of the recommendations and highlight any potential implementation issues.
- Agree, with other members of the Expert Group, the minutes of Expert Group meetings.

2.2 Committee members are not routinely expected to:

- Review the evidence
- Search the literature
- Write the pathways, models of care and accompanying guidance.

# Appendix B: Standing Orders

## 1. General

- 1.1 These Standing Orders describe the procedural rules for managing the work of the Expert Group. The Expert Group will act as an advisory body to SCIE.
- 1.2 Members of the Expert Group shall be bound by these Standing Orders and will be expected to abide by the 7 principles for the conduct of public life as recommended by the Nolan Committee, which are:
  - selflessness
  - integrity
  - objectivity
  - accountability
  - openness
  - honesty
  - leadership.
- 1.3 Behaviour by Expert Group members and attendees at Expert Group meetings such as bullying, harassment and victimisation is unacceptable to SCIE. SCIE is committed to taking the necessary action to ensure that such behaviour does not occur, and to taking the appropriate action in the event that it does occur.
- 1.4 All reasonable facilities shall be provided for members to ensure that they have the opportunity to participate fully and equitably in the business of the Expert Group.
- 1.5 Statements of Expert Group members made at meetings shall be relevant to the matter under discussion at the time and the decision of the co-chairs on questions of order, relevancy and interpretation (including conflicts of interest) shall be final.
- 1.6 The quorum is set at 50% of the full membership of the Expert Group
- 1.7 All members of the Expert Group shall abide by the principle of collective responsibility, stand by the recommendations of the Expert Group and not speak against them in public.
- 1.8 Members of the Expert Group are not permitted to submit comments as stakeholders during the consultation on any draft products and guidance. If an Expert Group member is involved with a registered stakeholder organisation,

they should not submit comments during the consultation on behalf of that organisation – someone else in the organisation should draft and submit the comments.

## **2. Confidentiality**

- 2.1 On appointment, Expert Group members will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement with SCIE relating to any information designated confidential by SCIE such as academic or commercial-in-confidence material or sensitive personal data.
- 2.2 Confidential papers and confidential information disclosed in Expert Group deliberations should not be discussed with colleagues who are not members of the Expert Group, with other organisations, the media, or members of the Expert Group who are excluded from discussions because of a conflict of interest.
- 2.3 If Expert Group members are asked by external parties – including stakeholders or their professional organisation – to provide information about the work of the Expert Group, they should discuss the request with the SCIE. They should also declare this at the next Expert Group meeting. Any enquiries from the media should be directed to SCIE's Project Manager.

## **3. Arrangements for the meetings**

- 3.1 SCIE will ensure that Expert Group meetings take place in venues that are accessible to, and have facilities for, disabled people.
- 3.2 Meetings of the Expert Group shall be held at such times and places as are deemed necessary to facilitate the conduct of its business.
- 3.3 EG members may also be required to attend a working group that may be associated with the Expert Group and will be expected to contribute to virtual discussions and occasional teleconferences as appropriate.
- 3.4 SCIE shall determine which aspects shall appear on every agenda in advance of each meeting.
- 3.5 Any other business shall be discussed at the discretion of the co-chairs. Meetings will normally begin at 10:00 am and finish no later than 4:30 pm unless otherwise advised.
- 3.6 Expert Group members will be expected to attend for the full day unless agreed in advance with the co-chairs or unless they have declared a conflict of interest to 1 or more discussions.

- 3.7 SCIE will make all reasonable attempts to agree each meeting date in advance and Expert Group members are expected to keep these dates free until they are released.

#### **4. Minutes**

- 4.1 The draft minutes of the Expert Group meetings shall be drawn up and submitted to the next meeting for approval.
- 4.2 The approved minutes will be published on SCIE's project website subject to the redaction of any confidential or otherwise exempt material within 20 working days of approval.

#### **5. Declarations of interest**

- 5.1 All Committee members must make an annual declaration of interests.
- 5.2 All members must make a declaration of any potential conflicts of interest that may require their withdrawal in advance of each meeting. This declaration will be reaffirmed again at the start of each meeting. Declarations of interest will be recorded in the minutes and published on SCIE's project website.
- 5.3 During the course of the meeting, if a conflict of interest arises with matters under consideration, the member concerned must withdraw from the meeting, or part thereof, as appropriate.
- 5.4 Experts invited to provide expert testimony, and co-opted members will make a declaration of interest before Expert Group meetings. This declaration will be reaffirmed again at the start of each meeting. These will be recorded in the minutes and published on the SCIE's project team website.

#### **6. Recording of meetings**

- 6.1 The recording of proceedings or the taking of pictures at Expert Group meetings by public attendees is not allowed.
- 6.2 The recording of meetings is permitted by SCIE where agreed by the Expert Group, and for the purposes of facilitating guideline development or promoting transparency. Recordings will be deleted on approval of the meeting minutes.

#### **7. Record of attendance**

- 7.1 A record will be kept of EG members' attendance at EG meetings via the minutes.

- 7.2 Members are expected: to attend at least 75% of meetings during a 12-month period not to miss more than 2 consecutive meetings.
- 7.3 If an EG member is unable to fulfil their duties (for example, because of illness), another recruitment process may be considered to replace that person.