

## Serious Case Review Quality Markers

### Supporting dialogue about the principles of good practice

### Quality Marker 16: Board written response

**Quality statement:** the board agrees a written response ready for publication that explains, clearly and succinctly, what action should be taken in response to the Serious Case Review (SCR) report

#### Rationale

Capturing in writing the conclusions of board discussions about the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) response to the SCR supports accountability, and therefore public trust that lessons will be learnt.

A written response provides the opportunity to set the SCR findings/recommendations in a broader context by describing where it fits in the bigger picture the LSCB has of practice locally. Depending on the model used for the SCR, the extent to which an SCR assesses how practice in the case relates to the way things are now varies. So the response is an opportunity for the LSCB to articulate where it thinks practice is currently and what has changed. By this means, the response provides contextual information that helps explain what is going to be prioritised, and what the LSCB is going to do to address the issues.

#### How might you know if you are meeting this quality marker?

1. Has sufficient time been scheduled to develop the written response, after the report has been presented to the board, before publication?
2. Is the LSCB response written in plain English?
3. Does the LSCB response (which may take a number of forms) explain whether the board accepts the findings of the review?
4. Does the LSCB response explain any priorities for action and how they fit within the broader learning and improvement framework?
5. Does the LSCB response say what action the board and its member agencies will take?
6. Does the LSCB response say how it proposes to monitor the effectiveness of any action that will be taken?
7. Does the LSCB response include national recommendations where necessary?

#### Knowledge base

- We have not been able to identify any relevant research base or practice knowledge for this quality statement.

## Link to statutory guidance and inspection criteria

- 'Working together' requires that LSCBs agree what action should be taken and produce a response when the SCR is published (HM Government, 2015: 79, 80).

## Tackling some common obstacles

- SCRs that identify the need for systemic changes require executive agreement and action which requires that LSCBs move away from previous custom and practice which has been to focus action exclusively on frontline practice.
- It is necessary for monitoring and evaluation of actions to be built in from the beginning, otherwise they may be overlooked.

This is one of a set of 18 Quality Markers which aim to support commissioners and reviewers to commission and conduct high quality reviews. Covering the whole process, the quality markers provide a consistent and robust approach to SCRs. They are based predominantly on established principles of effective reviews / investigation as well as SCR practice experience and expertise, and ethical considerations.

The SCR Quality Markers were produced as part of the Learning into Practice Project, a one-year DfE-funded project conducted by NSPCC and SCIE between April 2015 and March 2016. For more information see [nspcc.org.uk/lipp](http://nspcc.org.uk/lipp) or [scie.org.uk/lipp](http://scie.org.uk/lipp)