

Lessons Learned



Warwickshire
Safeguarding

Olivia's Story....

When Olivia was one-year old she was taken, by her parents, to hospital as they stated she had sustained an injury at home. Her parents said that this had happened 3 days previously, but they hadn't brought her to hospital because of concerns about Covid-19. On examination Olivia had sustained a very painful injury, with further examinations indicating that she had 6 additional older fractures that had been caused on at least 2 separate occasions. When questioned Olivia's parents suggested that Olivia had been cared for by several different relatives in the period leading up to the hospital attendance.

Her parents were interviewed, arrested and released on bail conditions of no unsupervised contact with children, and no contact with Olivia. A multi-agency strategy discussion was held, and a Section 47 assessment commenced, with planning for a child protection plan. Care proceedings were issued, and Olivia was made subject to an Interim Care Order and was placed in foster care.

Prior to this incident Olivia had been the subject of 3 separate single assessments from pre-birth until she was 6 months old; one of which was as a result of concerns about bruising.

What we have learned....

When Olivia's mother was pregnant with Olivia a referral was made to Children's Services with child in need support being offered. This was declined by parents and social work involvement was ended. There was no evidence of any consideration being given as part of this assessment to any pre-existing risks to the unborn baby. In addition, Olivia's father had been known to Children's Services during his childhood, for his mental wellbeing and in respect of his other children, however none of the historical detail was taken into consideration.

Learning for Practice: *When assessing parenting capacity ensure that history is reviewed when considering any risks as part of the pre-birth assessments or used to identify any further safeguards that may have been required to be put in place.*

When Olivia was a young baby a bruise was identified by the health visitor; no other bruises were present. A joint s47 meeting was held with the police, however a Child Protection medical was not completed. Olivia was seen by 2 different GP's over 3 visits where the bruising was considered to be a discolouration of the skin. **Learning for Practice:** *where there is a possible bruise to a non-mobile infant a Child Protection medical is expected so to ensure a more thorough assessment and wider scrutiny of all associated factors surrounding the child's environment, overall well-being, parenting capabilities and consideration of any further safeguarding risks.*



Lessons Learned (cont.)

What we have learned (contd.).....

Following Olivia's birth there had been a number of contacts with Children's Services that raised concerns that domestic abuse was a feature of the home environment and Olivia's lived experience. On each occasion these reports were risk assessed and recorded as standard and no further action taken. **Learning for Practice:** *When concerns are raised or referrals received, it is important to ensure that historical information is fully considered to ensure that children are safeguarded.*

What do I need to do....

Advice for professionals

1. Familiarise yourself with the [Warwickshire Interagency Safeguarding](#) procedures
2. Read the 7 Minute Briefing in respect of '[The Importance of History in Assessments](#)', '[Pre-birth assessments](#)' and '[Child Protection Medicals](#)'
3. Remember that where a non-accidental injury is suspected by a health professional and a referral is made, a Strategy discussion must always take place with Police, Children's Services, and the referring health professional.

Advice for communities

1. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Knowing the signs of child abuse can make it easier to spot and take action. Visit the [NSPCC website](#) for more information on the potential signs
2. If you are worried about a child talk about or report your concerns to Warwickshire Children's Social Care