

South West Regulation 44 Network

8th February 2018

10am - 12 / 1 pm

<http://www.princessroyaltaunton.co.uk/>

AGENDA

1. Introductions

Marie Tucker - Independent Visitor CICADA
Ray Elphick - Independent Visitor Compass
Mary Ryan - Independent Visitor
Nicky Doughty- Managing Director, Acorn Independence
Claire Woddon - Care Quality Associates
Marie Dowell - Independent Visitor
Mark Thomas Independent Visitor
John Woodhouse - Dialogue
Mark Brazier Independent Visitor
Mark Frost Independent Visitor
Steve Lowe - OFSTED

Apologies

Emma Crowther - PLymouth CC
Nick Scribbins - Devon CC
Julie Skorupka - Somerset CC

2. Minutes from last time - agreed as accurate

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PgpNdl8cdHPIANKthuLIdnZO0RpZMWU/view>

3. DfE Regulation 44 review

DfE are aware of the network and minutes are copied to them. They know that the aim of the network is to increase the quality of visits and reports across the region and to provide peer to peer support. To give confidence to homes, commissioners and OFSTED that we act as critical friends and are there to uphold the regulations, and to support homes to improve.

Alan Wood has been appointed to chair the Residential Care Leadership Board. He is currently setting up the board and developing a programme of work. Today he is at an ICHA meeting gaining an understanding of the work they do and talking about the RCLB. Marie continues to link with DfE and will share updates with the network when these are received.

Martin Narey has just published the fostering stocktake report and this recommends keeping the RCLB but having an overarching children in care permanence board that will consider the recommendations in the fostering review.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/679320/Foster_Care_in_England_Review.pdf

4. OFSTED views on what makes a good report - Steve Lowe

Healthy discussion about regulation visitors and ofsted inspectors having various views and ways of working. That we are all human and nobody gets it right all the time, and as long as we are child centred. Steve assured everyone on how valuable the regulation reports are in informing the OFSTED judgement. Some key things they look for:

- Are children safe?
- Is there a certain flexibility? Is the visitor looking at different things at each visit? Do they visit at different times and see different staff?
- Have key issues been identified and a way forward agreed?
- Is it analytical, rather than a checklist?
- It is helpful when visitors re-visit recommendations and comment on how these have been actioned and the impact of change.

Discussion about good and outstanding judgements and varied views across the sector. Some visitors feel a reduced appetite to gain an outstanding. A perceived pressure of maintaining this is a factor. Steve shared that homes that have gained an outstanding have been the homes that stand out. How the outstanding homes are often the ones that don't focus on OFSTED, but know the regulations well and are thoroughly child centred and pay attention to detail

We discussed the audience for the regulation 44 report and all agreed that it was difficult not knowing exactly who the report was written for, giving examples of what we may or may not capture, depending on who the report is for. We talked about how the lack of clarity on this leads visitors to try and capture everything, to satisfy all audiences, and there is a danger that this can dilute some reports. This may be better clarified as part of the DfE work on regulation 44. We agreed that visitors need to be seen as critical friends who work with providers to support them. That it is important for Registered Managers to realise this and to view their visitors this way.

Visitors said that they don't get feedback from OFSTED and that this would be helpful. We also talked about how the regulatory role can be isolating as there are no formal networks or ways of accessing training and information. We asked that OFSTED consider the network and how visitors could be better included in any information sharing, events, opportunities and consultations. Marie can distribute information to network members.

We talked about when contracts come to an end and the various reasons for this. It was suggested that it may be helpful for OFSTED to undertake brief exit interviews (by phone) when visitors leave a home to check reasons why they have left the role. Steve will take this back and discuss this with OFSTED colleagues.

Visitors talked about how they sometimes come across situations whereby external factors impact on the homes ability to deliver a service. In these situations visitors need to encourage homes to take the necessary steps to hold partners to account, using escalation procedures if needed.

Steve suggested that regulation visitors put their contact details on reports so that inspectors could contact them with any queries about the report or to follow up on any identified poor practice by other parties they may inspect.

5. Update from John on RM and RI forums

SW Registered Managers forum, co-ordinated by John at Dialogue, and Emma McVinnie (Dame Hannah Rogers Trust), is valued. They have had 3 meetings so far and last had 100 attendees. The forum is building a registered managers handbook. Currently working on 'what does a good regulation 45 look like?' Handbook will be posted here <https://dialogueltd.co.uk/swforum/>

Registered Managers have had OFSTED attending the forum and there is a drive by all to consider the culture in their homes. Homes are thinking about how they can help children feel valued and loved. Reviewing policies on physical affection (hugs). Looking at how signs of a workplace can be removed and a focus placed on the 'home'. For example putting extinguishers in cupboards, taking down unnecessary signs and notice boards. Homes are also reviewing office policies, to see if they can be office free or to look at how they can be more child friendly. Confidentiality of records is a factor and visitors shared that most homes are still very paper based and there is still some way to go in embracing more technological solutions to record keeping.

Dialogue also support a South West Responsible Individuals Forum. This is restricted to people line managing RM's and is very much about senior leadership

The forum has identified that there is a difficulty in retaining and recruiting registered managed and they are developing a Registered Managers programme.

There is also a need to ensure that Registered Managers get a robust induction into the home and this should include both information on the wider organisation as well as detailed training on the systems in the home.

The RI forum is also looking at how promising future RM's can be grown and supported to develop in a Managerial role.

6. Training for Regulation 44 visitors

John shared that he needs more interest before he can develop a Regulation 44 visitors programme. Interest is growing and a reminder to let John know if you are interested.

John asked Steve about the option of visitors shadowing OFSTED inspectors, attending briefings on key issues or perhaps the papers being disseminated. Steve will take this back and feed back to John.

We agreed to share templates where we could.

We also identified that we each have our own areas of expertise and agreed we would be interested in a training exchange scheme - delivering training in return for receiving training. Keen to know if anyone has ideas for how best to coordinate this?

A plea to share information we come across. Marie recently went to a 'What works centre' day and provided feedback.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KXJCx0GhZ2DwBrZgX1wtiH0-edFhTd1b/view?usp=sharing>

Avolve at Exeter University have also had their first Children in care event and they plan to hold another in a few months. Marie will ensure this is shared with all the different forums.

7. Sharing good practice and challenges

As well as talking about the environmental changes in homes to remove signs of institutionalisation, we also talked about other factors that could help improve the culture and feel of a home:

Visitors books - Steve confirmed that it was not a legal requirement for visitors to sign books, but that homes need to ensure children are kept safe and so good practice to keep a record of visitors. (Marie later spoke to ICHA who are also talking to OFSTED about this and they plan to issue a briefing).

We talked about some of the policies that exist in homes and how regulation 44 visitors need to encourage a more questioning culture. That staff should be encouraged to question blanket policies if these are not suited to the young people in the home.

Social media - Generally risk averse practice regarding how this is used by homes and by staff in their interactions with young people. A very challenging area, but a recognition that this issue will not go away and we need to ensure the benefits of social media are recognised as much as the risks, and the policies are modernised and meet young people's needs. Visitors to share examples of emerging practice where social media is being used proactively to support children.

Medication policy - Request for Marie to share briefing she wrote
<http://www.cicadaservices.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Administering-medication-in-children%E2%80%99s-homes1.pdf>

Terminology and jargon. Discussed how there is a need to be more mindful of this and to consider how some of the terms currently used can be changed to be more child friendly.

Transitions - where there is a plan for a child to move on to a new placement, visitors should look at how well the home inform this process. Are homes co-producing referral forms with social workers and ensuring that their knowledge of the child informs this key document? How well do homes support the move, retain links with the child and do they advocate for the child if they feel a prospective placement can not meet their needs? Agreed that transitions is a complex area and that this can benefit from having scrutiny from the Reg 44 visitor.

Next meeting: Date has not been set as will see if this can coincide with the next Children in Care event at Exeter University. (date to be announced)

Marie Tucker
<http://www.cicadaservices.co.uk/>

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