

The forums will provide opportunities for lively debate, networking and learning, and will be driven by practitioner feedback.

The forums will take place between 1.30pm and 3.30pm on the following dates:

- **20 January 2015**
Central Locality
Horizon Community College
- **27 January 2015**
West Locality
Kirk Balk community College
- **3 February 2015**
North East Locality
Shafton ALC
- **25 February 2015**
South East Locality
The Hill Primary School

Family Panels

Changes have been made to the Family Panels. The number has reduced to two panels, one covering the Central and West localities and the other the North East and South East.

The Central and West Panel will meet on the **first Thursday** morning of every month and the North East and South East Panel on the **third** Thursday of every month. Panels will commence at 9.30am and conclude business by 12.30pm.

All families coming to panel for consideration will have had an assessment (CAF, EHA, or appropriate CYP assessment as required).

It is the responsibility of practitioners bringing families to panel to ensure that they have the consent of the family (or a parent with parental responsibility) to bring the child, young person or family to panel and agree with them what information will be shared.

An EHA should not be completed simply as a referral form for the panel. Before an EHA can be discussed at panel, the practitioner must have agreed with the relevant Multi Agency Coordinator that additional resources are required and/or it is not achieving the agreed outcomes in the plan.

The panel provides an opportunity to share ideas with a range of other practitioners, and obtain practical support and guidance, which will make the early help plan more effective for the child and family. It can also be used to review Early Help Plans that have been open for more than 12 months, to ensure that they remain effective.

Key documents

- [Early Help Assessment form](#)
- [Universal consent and information sharing form](#)
- [Thresholds for Intervention: Continuum of Assessment of Need](#)
- [Pocket guide to thresholds](#)

Contact details

Please contact the Multi Agency Co-ordinators if you need further information or support.

West/central/north east [Central and West Panel]
Nigel Leeder: 07805914136
nigelleeder@barnsley.gov.uk

South east/children with disabilities
[South East and North East Panel]
Carol Ward: 07805914142
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January 2015

Early Help

Changing the way we work with Barnsley families



Changing the way we work with families

From 1 January 2015, we're changing the way we provide early help to families in Barnsley. This is in response to the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)', and to the requirements from our Ofsted inspection to revisit the Thresholds for Intervention for children at all levels (Tiers), including children's social care.

What's Early Help

Early Help means providing timely support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. Effective early help relies upon local agencies working together using the guidance in the [Thresholds for Intervention: Continuum of Assessment of Need](#) document:

- to identify children and families who would benefit from early help
- to undertake an assessment to determine the need for early help and the actions to be taken to improve outcomes for children and families.

What's changing?

The [Early Help Assessment \(EHA\) Form](#) will replace the Common Assessment Framework Form.

Although the process for undertaking an EHA remains the same, the format of the form has changed. The front sheet asks for the whole family's details and the parent's assessment is more detailed. Each child will still have a Unique Reference Number for their section of the Whole Family Assessment and the individual child's assessment will be completed by the practitioner or agency who knows that child best.

For example, where there is a child under five years of age, this part of the assessment may be completed by either the health visitor or the children's centre/nursery. If there are children in the family of school age, a representative from school will be asked to contribute as they will be best placed to support the completion of the section on the school aged child/children.

In this way, the Early Help Assessment (CAF) should provide a more holistic view of the family and a multi-agency approach to providing support. It also avoids the need to complete full assessments – one for each child.

Where agencies already carry out a holistic assessment, this can be deemed an Early Help Assessment and should be attached to the Early Help Assessment form. You only need to provide additional information on the form. With the informed consent of the family, the assessment can be shared with the relevant agencies. A [universal consent and information sharing form](#) for use with Barnsley families is available in the integrated working toolkit.

Early Help Assessments will continue to be registered through the Stronger Families Team Business Support Officers, who are able to give out the individual Unique Reference Numbers – one for each child. The Multi Agency Co-ordinators, Carol Ward and Nigel Leeder, remain available through the Stronger Families Teams Business Support Officers and are keen to support practitioners completing Early Help Assessments and offer them advice and guidance on Early Help Assessments, Thresholds - Continuum of Assessment of Need, and the Barnsley Assessment Framework.

Early Help Assessment Training

Training has been developed for all practitioners working with children, young people and families to support the completion of Early Help Assessments and in facilitating Team Around the Family meetings. This has replaced the previous CAF training and is held monthly apart from August and December. All training can be booked through the [CPD website](#).

These are the dates for 2015 up to the summer holidays:

- | | |
|---------------|------------|
| ■ 23 January | ■ 22 April |
| ■ 24 February | ■ 13 May |
| ■ 25 March | ■ 23 June |

Practitioner Forums

All practitioners working with children, young people and their families are welcome to attend these termly locality based forums.

The forums will give us a chance to update each other about changes and developments and to discuss locality news and concerns.

There will also be an opportunity to discuss individual Early Help Assessments in confidence. The focus of the first forum in each locality will consider how to undertake Early Help Assessments. Other topics for discussions will include information sharing, and the completion of the Request for Service form to children's social care and for you to identify any themes for future meetings.