

## Introduction

The death of a child is always a tragedy. Talking and thinking about a child's death is a sensitive, very difficult and painful subject. We understand that this can be particularly upsetting for parents, families and carers. This leaflet explains some of the things that have to happen after your child has died. It also provides a list of organisations that you may find useful.

Whenever a child dies unexpectedly, we need to carry out a review to ensure that we thoroughly examine what happened and ensure that you have access to any support you may need. This review is called the Child Death Overview and is a Government requirement for all Local Safeguarding Children Boards. The more we understand about why your child died, the more we can try to help you understand more fully what happened to your child. We can also try to prevent the deaths of other children in the future. We also need to ensure that any professionals involved with your child worked together effectively and provided you with the proper support.

One person will be identified as your point of contact to keep you up to date with the review. If you have any unanswered questions after reading this leaflet you can contact this person. Their name and contact details are:

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## What the Law Requires

This leaflet is designed for families whose child has died suddenly and unexpectedly and describes the 3 main parts of the Child Death Overview Process. Where children have had a life limiting condition the family should already have received information.

### 1. The Rapid Response following an unexpected death.

This response is conducted by a group of key professionals who come together to enquire into a sudden and unexpected death of a child.

The aim of the Rapid Response is to gather information as to why your child may have died and to ensure that you, your family (and if necessary, the community) have access to all the support you need. Your child will have been examined by a doctor and blood and other samples may be taken. You will have been asked what happened. You should also be offered the opportunity to spend time with your child and have a memento provided if that is helpful to you.

There may be a visit to where your child has died, usually by a police officer. This is to try and find out exactly why your child died and it may also help other children and families in the future.

### 2. Summary Meeting

When all the investigations are complete (usually after 3 - 4 months) another meeting takes place between all professionals involved. The purpose of this meeting is to review all the information

available to identify, if possible, how and why your child died. This may help to prevent future tragedies. The meeting will also review how professionals worked with you and whether there are any issues or learning to address. You will usually be asked, by your local contact, for your views before this meeting takes place so that your views can be fed into the meeting and the findings will be shared with you after the meeting if you would find this helpful.

### 3. The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

CDOP reviews all deaths under 18 years. Using the information about each child's death it considers whether it can make any recommendations to prevent similar deaths or to improve services for children and their families. The recommendations are shared locally and nationally and may assist in the planning of services for children and families. The panel is also there to ensure families are getting the right support following a child's death.

It is not possible for parents or family representatives to attend the Panel meetings. However, we would be happy to let you know our findings if you would find this helpful. You can contact the Chair of Panel through your local contact or via Sharon Mitchell on 01228 226898, [LSCB@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB@cumbria.gov.uk), Cumbria LSCB, Children's Services, The Old Courts, Carlisle | CA3 8NA All information we gather will be treated with the deepest respect and in strictest confidence. None of our findings, recommendations or reports will name your child or family, other than those which may go to your GP.

## The Coroner

All unexpected deaths must be reported to the Coroner. This will have been explained to you by the doctors following your child's death. The police act as the coroner's officer to support the coroner in the gathering of information. More information about the Coroner's process and the postmortem is described in the Lullaby leaflet which your local contact can provide you with, if you wish.

## Who we are.

1. **Cumbria Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)** is made up of professionals from various organisations such as the hospital, police, ambulance, primary care, local authority and voluntary services. The Chair of CDOP, Colin Cox, can be contacted via the CDOP Co-ordinator, Sharon Mitchell on 01228 226898, [LSCB@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:LSCB@cumbria.gov.uk). Or via Cumbria LSCB, Children's Services, The Old Courts, Carlisle | CA3 8NA
2. **Cumbria Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)** has overall responsibility for the CDOP. Further information about the Child Death Overview Panel or the LSCB can be found on the website – [www.cumbrialscb.com](http://www.cumbrialscb.com) or from the Government Guidance; Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015. [www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/index.html](http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/index.html)

## Useful Contacts in Cumbria

### Child Bereavement UK Family support services

Cumbria Team 01539 628311  
[cumbriasupport@childbereavementuk.org](mailto:cumbriasupport@childbereavementuk.org)

### Jigsaw Children's Hospice

Durdar Road, Carlisle CA2 4SD 01228 810801

### Cruse@Cumbria (Bereavement Care)

[Cumbria@cruse.org.uk](mailto:Cumbria@cruse.org.uk) 07071780761  
[www.crusecumbria.org.uk](http://www.crusecumbria.org.uk)  
National Helpline: 0808 808 1677 [helpline@cruse.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cruse.org.uk)

## Useful Contacts Nationally

### **Child Bereavement UK**

[www.childbereavement.org.uk](http://www.childbereavement.org.uk) Helpline 0800 02 88 40  
[support@childbereavement.org.uk](mailto:support@childbereavement.org.uk)

### **Winston's wish** [www.Winstonswish.org.uk](http://www.Winstonswish.org.uk)

0845 203 0405 (Mon-Fri 9-5pm. Wed also 19-21.30)  
[info@winstonswish.org.uk](mailto:info@winstonswish.org.uk)

### **The Compassionate Friends** [www.tcf.org.uk](http://www.tcf.org.uk)

Support and counselling for and from bereaved persons  
Helpline: 0345 123 2304 (10.00 – 16.00 / 19.00 – 22.00)  
[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)  
0808 802 5544 (Mon-Fri 9.30-4pm)

### **The Lullaby Trust** [www.lullabytrust.org.uk/LHome](http://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/LHome)

Helpline: 0808 802 6868 (Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, other days 6-10pm) [support@lullabytrust.org.uk](mailto:support@lullabytrust.org.uk)

### **Brake: helpline for road crash victims**

0808 8000401 (mon-Fri 10.00-16.00)  
[helpline@brake.org.uk](mailto:helpline@brake.org.uk) [www.brake.org.uk](http://www.brake.org.uk)

### **SANDS** (specifically for neonatal deaths)

[www.uk-sands.org](http://www.uk-sands.org) Tel: 020 7436 5881  
Email: [helpline@uk-sands.org](mailto:helpline@uk-sands.org)

## A Guide for Parents, Families and Carers Whose Child has Died Unexpectedly

## Describing the Child Death Review Process

## The Cumbria Safeguarding Children's Board

# CUMBRIA LSCB

CUMBRIA LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD