

Chief Social Worker Practice Review – Te Riu Management Response Work Programme – December 2023

| Number | Action | Action taken | Status |
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| Practice decision making | | | |
| 1.1 | Addressed the decisions and actions of Oranga Tamariki staff with regards to Malachi, with a particular focus on management and leadership accountability, recognising that the social worker who undertook the initial assessment should not have been put in a position of responsibility beyond their experience. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>Concerns regarding the decisions and actions of Oranga Tamariki staff have been addressed appropriately. For privacy reasons, further detail regarding employment matters is not included.</p> | Complete |
| 1.2 | <p>Provided all senior managers with a letter of expectation from the Chief Executive that requires them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that only social workers with more than 12 months experience, as a registered and practicing social worker, have the sole responsibility for completing initial assessments • Reinforce that the practice standards are the core requirements and minimum expectations for practice, and that it is their responsibility to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All staff understand this ○ The standards are well understood by their staff ○ They regularly review practice to understand the extent to which standards are being met ○ Regular feedback is provided to staff about their practice, and action is taken, including additional support, development, and oversight, where it is identified that the standards are not being met ○ They are actively managing and addressing systemic issues that may prevent social workers from being able to meet the standards <p>They immediately escalate any concerns which may be impacting on the quality of our response to tamariki and whānau when these are unable to be resolved locally.</p> | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>A Letter of Practice Expectations from the Chief Executive, Chappie Te Kani was sent to all Tier 2 and 3 leaders responsible for the delivery of services to tamariki and whānau on 30 November 2022.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>The expectations as outlined in the letter from the Chief Executive are being monitored both by National Office and through Regional Manager reporting lines. This monitoring shows that the expectations are being met, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The practice that initial assessments will only be completed by social workers with more than 12 months experience as a registered and practicing social worker has been embedded. • We are supporting understanding and application of the Practice Standards by this being the primary focus of the recently introduced 'He Akoranga' collaborative learning forums. <p>Staff are encouraged to raise any concerns they have through sending reminders about the range of channels available such as 'Speak Up' and reinforcing this message through management lines.</p> | Complete |
| 1.3 | Reminded all staff of the channels to raise any concerns they have that are impacting on their ability to perform their role. This includes raising any concerns directly with their line manager in the first instance, and/or confidentially via the Oranga Tamariki Speak Up channel if appropriate. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>Chief Executive Chappie Te Kani sent an email to all staff on 1 December 2022 in advance of the publication of the Chief Social Worker's Practice Review which included a reminder about the confidential Speak Up channel and encouraged staff to use this if they need to.</p> | Complete |
| 1.4 | Issued a practice note from the Chief Social Worker reminding all social workers, supervisors, and practice staff that the practice standards are the minimum expectations, with a particular focus on case recording requirements. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>The practice note was issued on 5 December 2022 and is available on the Oranga Tamariki Practice Centre here.</p> <p>A reminder was sent via a December 2022 Operational Update to managers, asking them to ensure the message was shared with all frontline staff.</p> | Complete |

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| | | <p>A further message from the Chief Social Worker was sent to all Practice Leaders on 20 February 2023. This included a slide pack presentation and discussion notes on the Practice Standard 'Keep accurate records' to be worked through with frontline staff.</p> | |
| 1.5 | <p>Established regular social work forums for all social work staff to engage directly with the Chief Social Worker and other senior social work leaders on issues which may be impacting their ability to meet core practice expectations.</p> | <p>Progress Update #1 In November and December 2022, the Chief Social Worker and other senior social work leaders held 11 Regional Forums with frontline staff. A summary of key insights was provided to the leadership team, Te Riu, in December 2022 and a 'lessons learned' exercise has been completed. Planning for a second round of Regional Forums is progressing.</p> <p>Progress Update #2) As noted in our previous update, the Chief Social Worker and other senior social work leaders held 11 Regional Forums with frontline staff and planning for a second round of Regional Forums was progressing.</p> <p>The second round of Regional Forums have been confirmed for 2023. These will include one in-person forum and one virtual forum per region.</p> <p>Progress Update #3 The Chief Social Worker and the Deputy Chief Executive – Quality Practice and Experiences met with Services for Children and Family (SCAF) staff in all regions across September and October 2023.</p> | Complete |
| 1.6 | <p>Finalise the assessment of all recent reports of concern at the Te Āhuru Mōwai site in the last three months where the initial assessment did not result in further action; take any remedial actions required.</p> | <p>Progress Update #1 Phase one (reports of concern between July and September 2022) case file analysis was completed on 25 November 2022.</p> <p>Phase two (reports of concern between May and June 2022) case file analysis was completed on 20 January 2022.</p> <p>Remedial action was taken where required, including creating new reports of concern or referring cases to the National Contact Centre for further assessment.</p> | Complete |
| 1.7 | <p>Review our practice in response to reports of concern across the country and act on any findings and recommendations to strengthen practice.</p> | <p>Progress Update #1 Phase one case file analysis was completed before the end of 2022. A final report back on the findings is expected in March 2023.</p> <p>Progress Update #2 This review is now complete. Case-file analysis of a random sample of reports of concern has been carried out to better understand the extent to which current practice aligns with practice policy and guidance requirements.</p> <p>Progress Update #3 The findings from this review are informing wider work to strengthen initial and core assessment practice being progressed through the Future Direction Plan and the Oranga Tamariki Practice Programme. This also covers the key insights from Actions 2.2 and 3.6.</p> | Complete |

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| 1.8 | Ensure all social workers employed by Oranga Tamariki for less than 12 months have completed the current practice induction and are being actively supported to only undertake duties consistent with their level of experience. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>The induction process for the first 12 months of practice is being strengthened to ensure there is greater oversight of the duties undertaken by new social workers in their first year.</p> <p>The Professional Development group is working with frontline leaders to increase support for new social workers and have learning better aligned with roles and levels of experience during their first 12 months.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>The new 12-month foundational learning programme, Puāwai, commenced delivery for new social workers in January 2023. All new social workers are either already participating in Puāwai or are enrolled in the next intake.</p> <p>The estimated completion date has been extended to allow time to further actively ensure that social workers only undertake duties consistent with their level of experience.</p> <p>Progress Update #3</p> <p>Learner Profiles are being completed by all new social workers at the start of the Puāwai induction programme, to help understand their background and experience. This includes when they started with Oranga Tamariki, when they qualified as a social worker and from where did they graduate, including when did they qualify and which tertiary institution, and any previous work experience including with other government agencies or Iwi or community providers.</p> <p>A second learner profile will then be completed at end of the programme to capture other key information, better understand how they can be supported to undertake duties consistent with their level of experience.</p> | Complete |
| 1.9 | Progress developing an accountability and reporting mechanism that will give social workers, supervisors, and managers greater visibility about the extent to which practice standards are being met across their practice. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>A programme of work is underway to implement this action. The requirements for developing the required mechanisms are currently being scoped. Further work is required to determine how the accountability mechanism can be operationalised.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>Information about adherence to the Practice Standards has been collected in a sample of self-assessment cases through the Quality Practice Tool (refer to Action 1.10).</p> <p>We have developed new practice quality indicators aligned to the Practice Standards and new Practice Approach. These are ways to measure adherence to the Practice Standards and will be integrated into case file analysis work (such as the routine case file analysis of practice with tamariki in care against key requirements of the National Care Standards).</p> <p>Work is ongoing to utilise our existing social worker reporting tool, Whiti, as a tool to support understanding how the practice standards are being met. Content has recently been expanded to include some Youth Justice matters.</p> <p>A learning offering has been embedded in the Puāwai social worker induction programme that weaves together learning the basic skills for using and understanding Whiti with how the content supports the Practice Framework and Practice Standards. Feedback from the facilitator supporting the latest cohort was</p> | Complete |

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| | | <p>that this was well received, and a request has been made to run an additional session.</p> <p>The accountability mechanism will be met through the performance development and performance review tools and processes as outlined in action 1.11.</p> | |
| 1.10 | Ensure Practice leaders review a sample of cases with their staff, using the Quality Practice Tool and report on the extent to which there is evidence that the expected standards are being met. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>The Practice Standards Quality Practice Tool was distributed to all Practice Leaders by 4 November 2022. Reminders have been sent to Practice Leaders to complete and return the reviews and individual follow-up is currently underway. A report on the insights from these reviews is expected in March 2023.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>Practice Leaders have now completed two rounds of monitoring using the Quality Practice Tool. The findings have been summarised and shared with staff to support ongoing oversight of the extent to which the practice standards are being achieved. The findings are also informing ongoing work to continue to strengthen practice for tamariki and whānau. The summary of the findings has been included with this report.</p> <p>Progress Update #3</p> <p>Whilst this action point was completed in June 2023, we note that to support ongoing operational oversight and embedding of the practice standards within individual sites, a third round of Practice Leader-led review using the Quality Practice Tool was undertaken in August 2023.</p> | Complete |
| 1.11 | Review and update performance development and performance review tools and processes for social work practitioners and managers to ensure the practice standards are well embedded, enabling the provision of development support and appropriate responses when they are not met. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>No progress to report on this action.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>Performance development and review tools and processes for social work practitioners and supervisors/managers were reviewed and updated in April 2023. This was circulated for feedback in May and June 2023 before being trialed and tested as part of Phase Two. The delay is due to members of the working group wanting to seek feedback from the national PSA delegates, and the need to test and fully implement the tools and process for all practitioners and managers across the country.</p> <p>Progress Update #3</p> <p>The updated performance development and performance review tools and processes for social work practitioners and managers are currently awaiting sign out, following which an implementation plan will be established so they become well embedded for social workers and practitioners.</p> | The review and update is complete, however further work is to fully implement the tools and processes following sign out |
| Site environment, support and leadership | | | |
| 2.1 | Deployed senior social workers, a manager, practice leader and national practice advisor to the Te Āhuru Mōwai site to strengthen site leadership and support practice decision making. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>An appointment to the temporary Assistant Regional Manager role has been made and started on 16 January 2023.</p> | Complete |

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| | | A practice leader has also been appointed and support for a national practice advisor was provided by the Quality Practice & Experiences group. | |
| 2.2 | Complete work already underway to analyse critical workforce, practice, and work management measures across all sites to identify whether there are other sites with indicators of practice and management concern warranting further examination and intervention. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>A dashboard of key site indicators has been developed and was shared with Service Delivery leaders in early December 2022. Next steps in relation to key insights arising from the dashboard were agreed with Service Delivery leaders in January 2023.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>As noted in our previous update, a dashboard of key site indicators was developed and shared in December 2022. This was distributed to Regional Managers to support the identification of any sites that may be experiencing particular pressures in practice at the initial assessment stage, and to support the identification of actions needed locally to address any barriers to quality practice.</p> <p>An updated version of the dashboard was developed in April 2023 to identify any changes in the indicators following the sharing of the initial analysis. It is intended that this analysis will be carried out on a quarterly basis moving forward.</p> <p>Progress Update #3</p> <p>This dashboard is now being updated on a quarterly basis to support operational oversight of practice and the identification of any actions that may be needed to enable quality initial assessment practice within individual sites.</p> | Complete |
| 2.3 | Implement a comprehensive plan for the Bay of Plenty region that addresses the broader workload, leadership, development, stakeholder, practice, and culture issues identified in the review. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>In addition to the actions taken under 1.1, 1.6, and 2.1 above, a Region Support Plan is being developed, with elements of the Plan already in place.</p> <p>A draft Leadership Site Culture development plan has been developed and work is underway to implement this.</p> <p>Recruitment of current vacancies is underway.</p> <p>Inductions specific to the Bay of Plenty region commenced in December 2022. Engagement with iwi partners has been confirmed for early March 2023 to determine their support to the region.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>Team reset workshops have been organised for all sites including the Bay of Plenty Regional Leadership Team. These will be delivered by an external provider and will focus on building trust and working relationships, working collaboratively to create an open and transparent work culture, with the outcome to develop and agree team kawa, tikanga and workplace protocols.</p> <p>A practice support plan is being developed to support both the Regional Manager and Site Managers who do not have a direct social work practice background. This plan will focus on the training and use of social work tools like CYRAS, Whiti and Te Pakoro. Clinical supervision is also being offered. Further engagement with the region will determine any additional support that is required. Engagement with iwi is ongoing. Iwi have requested time to consider their support to the Bay of Plenty region; hence the change to the target end date for this action. The Regional Manager has agreed to support iwi to develop a plan and determine what role they may provide.</p> | Complete |

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| | | <p>Progress Update #3</p> <p>The Bay of Plenty Regional Manager supported by the leadership team has met with the Professional Development team to discuss a leadership development programme to support leadership across the region.</p> <p>The Practice Support Plan remains in development, and regular engagement with local iwi continues.</p> | |
| 2.4 | <p>As part of the Future Direction Plan work to develop an operating model, identify early opportunities to free up social work capacity through consideration of paraprofessional roles, reallocation of tasks, centralised approaches to non-core social work and removing no longer required policy expectations.</p> | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>The Chief Social Worker and the Evidence Centre are developing a prototype software tool that will help measure the complexity of a social worker's caseload. The use of this tool has important implications for the distribution of staff resources, regional boundaries, and the future transfer of resources to communities. It is intended that a draft tool will be ready by the end of June 2023.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>This action aligns with work underway as part of the Future Direction Plan (FDP), specifically FDP Action 2.3 (developing a model to inform allocation and resourcing) and FDP Action 2.5 (clarifying the role of Oranga Tamariki social workers, and other professionals).</p> <p>Paraprofessional roles are being considered as part of the development of a new operating model.</p> <p>The Office of the Chief Social Worker and Evidence Centre are continuing work on the measurement of social worker caseload complexity.</p> <p>Progress Update #2a</p> <p>The Office of the Chief Social Worker and Evidence Centre are continuing work on the measurement of social worker caseload complexity.</p> <p>A software programme is in development and the indicators of case complexity are due to be tested by experienced social workers at sites in July 2023. Feedback will help shape a survey that will go out to a larger group of social workers. Their feedback will help fine tune the complexity measures in the tool. We anticipate the software tool will be ready for use by in September 2023.</p> <p>Progress Update #3</p> <p>In September 2023 a survey was undertaken to test the robustness of the social worker caseload complexity measures that have been developed. The survey received around 240 responses, which are currently being analysed and this may result in some changes to the computer coding of the statistical model. It is intended that there will be an initial version of the model and report completed by late 2023, and a full version of the model will be ready in early 2024.</p> <p>Work is continuing to explore the role of care and protection social workers and what tasks might be able to be completed by allied practitioners / paraprofessionals. Two workshops were held in September and October 2023 with frontline kaimahi in Auckland to gather their feedback and input into this work.</p> | Complete |
| Practice guidance, professional development, and interagency processes | | | |

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| 3.1 | With Police, completed a recent review and strengthened the Child Protection Protocol in particular, the need for early consultation to determine whether reported concerns meet the threshold for joint investigation. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>The Child Protection Protocol was reviewed and updated in 2021, with implementation and joint training taking place in March 2022.</p> | Complete |
| 3.2 | Confirmed that all sites have completed the annual Child Protection Protocol joint training with Police. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>This was confirmed in November 2022 during the development of the Te Riu Management Response to the Chief Social Worker's Practice Review.</p> | Complete |
| 3.3 | Reached in principle agreement with the Police Commissioner, Ministry of Health, and Te Whatu Ora – Health New Zealand to include a clear role for health in the Child Protection Protocol to assist in identifying and determining evidence of child abuse and neglect. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>An in-principle agreement was reached in November 2022. Work is ongoing to explore the different ways for health to join the Child Protection Protocol. This will be progressed as part of the scheduled formal review of the Child Protection Protocol, which has been brought forward.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>Oranga Tamariki met with colleagues from Police, Te Whatu Ora and Te Aka Whai Ora in late 2022 and again on 16 February to discuss health potentially joining the Child Protection Protocol (CPP). It was agreed that the review of CPP scheduled for the end of the financial year would start early, that Te Whatu Ora and Te Aka Whai Ora would participate in this review, and that this review would explore health potentially joining the CPP.</p> <p>A draft Terms of Reference has been developed and is currently with Police, Te Whatu Ora and Te Aka Whai Ora for review. This action is now considered completed, but ongoing work is required to finalise the role of health in the CPP.</p> <p>Progress Update #3</p> <p>A survey has been sent to Police and Oranga Tamariki workers to seek their views on the Child Protection Protocol (CPP), specifically asking about their experiences engaging with health matters, and getting access to health advice. The feedback will help inform the ongoing review of the CPP and work to ensure that clear, up-to-date operational guidance is available to front line workers to respond appropriately to the needs of children, young people, their family and whānau.</p> <p>A range of options around the nature of health involvement are being considered. Opportunities to improve current CPP mechanisms within the existing Memorandum of Understanding between health agencies, Police and Oranga Tamariki are also being considered along with opportunities for joint training.</p> <p>Te Whatu Ora has employed an experienced advisor to develop a national CPP for the health agencies that reflects the reformed health system.</p> | Complete |
| 3.4 | Commenced a review of existing complaints processes and policies with a view to determining which complaints require a site, regional or national response. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>The Oranga Tamariki complaints structure is based on the principle that resolution is best achieved as close to the source of the issue as possible and at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>A review of the use of the pathway matrix for determining a site vs centralised response commenced in November 2022. It was confirmed that the current parameters are correct.</p> | Complete |

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| | | <p>The National Feedback and Complaints team have strengthened their quality assurance process in relation to site-led responses to complaints to ensure any concerns can be addressed before completion. Currently around 50% of all site-led responses are subject to quality assurance.</p> <p>In August 2021 Oranga Tamariki commenced Manaaki Kōrero, a project that involves Oranga Tamariki partnering with VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai to enable tamariki, rangatahi and whānau to co-design feedback, complaints, information, advice, and assistance processes that are ‘fit-for-whānau’.</p> | |
| 3.5 | Review existing policy and guidance to ensure there is clear direction about the recording and assessment of photographs and other ‘additional information’ received following an initial report of concern. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>This review has been commissioned and will result in a decision being made on the treatment and storage of photographs within CYRAS (the main case management system for Oranga Tamariki), followed by updated policy and guidance.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>This work is in progress but has been delayed due to capacity constraints. We are progressing as a priority and anticipate finalisation in June 2023.</p> <p>Progress Update #2a</p> <p>Steps 1 and 2 have been strengthened to emphasise the need to understand how the whānau or family see the situation for te tamaiti and to consider the concerns in the context of all information received, including visual information such as photographs. This content will be strengthened so it more completely reflects our commitment to practice framed by te Tiriti o Waitangi, based on a mana-enhancing paradigm for practice, and drawing from Te Ao Māori principles of oranga to support mana tamaiti, whakapapa and whanaungatanga. We each need to consider how we can apply these principles to our practice when reading this guidance.</p> <p>Changes have been made to the following, which have now been published on the Oranga Tamariki Practice Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial assessment phase (guidance) • Using chronologies to support decision-making in the initial assessment phase (guidance) • Considerations when responding to information received (practice tool) • Report of concern response timeframe (practice tool) • Report of concern response pathway (practice tool) • Case recording (policy) • Assessment (policy). | Complete |

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| 3.6 | Review the quality of investigations undertaken subject to the Child Protection Protocol, and act on findings and recommendations to strengthen practice, including sharing any learnings with Police. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>Phase one case file analysis is underway and is expected to be completed by the end of February 2023. A report on the findings, key recommendations and next steps is expected to be completed by the end of April 2023.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>This review is now complete. Case-file analysis of a random sample of Child Protection Protocol cases has been carried out to better understand the extent to which current practice aligns with practice policy and guidance requirements.</p> <p>Progress Update #3</p> <p>The findings from this review have been summarised and are informing wider work to strengthen initial and core assessment practice being progressed through the Future Direction Plan and Oranga Tamariki Practice Programme. This summary also covers the key insights from Actions 1.7 and 2.2.</p> | Complete |
| 3.7 | Commence a range of supervision initiatives that will significantly enhance the quality of supervision social workers receive and the capacity of supervisors to provide quality supervision. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>Four initiatives have been identified as part of the Supervision Early Enhancements work programme that will enhance both the quality of supervision that social workers receive and the capacity of supervisors to provide quality supervision.</p> <p>These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading Practice Programme for new supervisors and practice leaders • Kaitiakitanga Postgraduate Diploma in Bicultural Professional Supervision with Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (20 places) • Tangata whenua and bicultural supervision model • Group Supervision Model <p>Induction into the supervision model for external supervisors supporting the group supervision pilot has commenced. The first group supervision for supervisors began in March 2023.</p> | Complete |
| 3.8 | In early 2023 launch the new Puawai (required practice induction for all Social Workers) and Leaders in Practice professional development programme, and develop additional learning resources for all practice staff, ensuring that the critical learning needs identified in the review are embedded within the core curriculum. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>The Puāwai and Leaders in Practice programmes launched on 30 January 2023. Work will be ongoing throughout 2023 to develop additional learning resources and embed the critical learning needs within the core curriculum.</p> | Complete |
| 3.9 | Review and improve the graduate pathway for prospective and new social workers that includes the current supported practice step programme. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>The graduate pathway is currently being reviewed and proposals for improvements is expected to be ready for consideration by the end of March 2023. The completion date for this action is dependent on the options that are identified.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>This review was initially expected to be completed by the end of March 2023, however work on this Action has been delayed due to resource constraints. Considering or implementing any improvements to the pathway, and therefore completing the action, is dependent on the outcome of the review.</p> | Not addressed as worded, action addressed through other work. |

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| | | <p>Progress Update #3</p> <p>Resource availability has impacted progressing this action.</p> <p>The new Puāwai induction programme has been specifically designed to support new social workers including new graduates and experienced practitioners.</p> <p>Through the evaluation process that will be carried out at the end of 2023, we will determine if those who would have previously undertaken the supported practice step programme, have their needs met by the new Puāwai induction programme.</p> | |
| 3.10 | Refresh information about our complaints process on our website, in our offices and in a form which can be given to whānau to make it easier for them to understand their right to complain and what to expect when they do. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>Draft content has been agreed in consultation with VOYCE – Whakarongo Mai. Updated information about our complaints process is expected to be available in March 2023.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>The updated information about our complaints process was published on our website in March 2023 and is available here.</p> | Complete |
| 3.11 | Undertake a training session with all managers on the current Oranga Tamariki complaints process aimed at improving the way complaints are recognised and responded to. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>Detailed planning is underway for these training sessions to occur in March 2023.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>The training session was undertaken in March 2023 and additional sessions were offered in May 2023 for a wider group of staff.</p> | Complete |
| 3.12 | Review and update how we respond to serious events to ensure we move quickly to understand, review, and assess the quality and appropriateness of our practice. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>A Working Group has been established to undertake this review and Terms of Reference have been agreed. This work is expected to be completed by the end of March 2023, with responses confirmed and an oversight mechanism established.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>The process for escalating serious events has been reviewed and refined. Key processes for responding to serious events have been defined and called for ready access to all decision makers and relevant practitioners. A 'Daily Start Up' meeting has been established to consider all serious events that occurred over the previous 24 hours to ensure the appropriate escalation process and immediate response has been carried out. A weekly 'Decision Making Forum' (DMF) has been established provides a centralised escalation pathway in response to a death or significant event. The DMF is attended by the Deputy Chief Executives for Service Delivery and Quality Practice and Experiences, and reviews serious events that occurred over the last week and ensures the ongoing review of processes and outcomes.</p> | Complete |
| The wider community and system: a need for local and connected responses | | | |
| 4.1 | Made immediate changes to guidance regarding the degree to which engagement with tamariki, whānau and others can occur as part of the initial assessment in line with 2019 legislation changes. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>Changes were made to three practice policies and related guidance to reflect the legal opinion regarding section 17 of the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989.</p> | Complete |

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| | | This was communicated to staff on 5 December 2022. The policies and guidance are available on the Oranga Tamariki Practice Centre. | |
| 4.2 | Review the existing Decision Response Tools , that guide how we respond to Reports of Concern, associated practice guidance and policy to ensure they are consistent with legislation and best practice expectations. Including clearer guidance about our response to tamariki who are incarcerated, and how concerns are reported about their safety, wellbeing, and care. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>This review has been commissioned, focussing on the improvements needed for tamariki with a parent in prison.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>This review is underway but has been delayed due to capacity constraints. The review will focus on the improvements needed for tamariki with a parent in prison. We are progressing as a priority and anticipate finalisation in June 2023.</p> <p>Progress Update #2a</p> <p>Several changes have now been made to strengthen our practice to ensure there is clear direction about the recording and assessment of photographs and other 'additional information' received following an initial report of concern and to ensure how we respond to reports of concern is consistent with legislation and best practice expectation. This includes clear guidance about our response to tamariki whose parents or caregivers are incarcerated and how concerns are reported about their safety, wellbeing and care.</p> <p>Changes have been made to the following, which have now been published on the Oranga Tamariki Practice Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial assessment phase (guidance) • Using chronologies to support decision-making in the initial assessment phase (guidance) • Considerations when responding to information received (practice tool) • Report of concern response timeframe (practice tool) • Report of concern response pathway (practice tool) • Case recording (policy) • Assessment (policy). | Complete |
| 4.3 | Engage with partner agencies regarding the Chief Social Worker's recommendation to consider a review of the effectiveness of the Children's Act 2014 in clarifying the responsibilities of children's agencies. Such engagement would occur alongside the consideration of recommendations arising from the Systems Review. | <p>Progress Update #1</p> <p>The Office of the Chief Social Worker is working with the System Leadership team to determine the scope of the work for this action.</p> <p>Progress Update #2</p> <p>The third working group meeting for this Action was held in May 2023 and focused on developing a draft description of the current children's system and its formal and informal parts.</p> <p>Progress Update #3</p> <p>The working group continues to make good progress against this action. A second report back in September 2023 concluded that the existing formal children's system has a range of opportunities to improve child safety, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviewing the membership of the formal children's system, including children's agencies, agencies required to have child protection policies, agencies required to conduct safety checks of children's workers, and child welfare and protection agencies | Complete |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• strengthening cross-agency practice of how these statutory obligations, particularly child protection policies, are implemented• exploring options for what a cross-system responsibility to check on the safety of children could look like in practice (and the corresponding legislative options)• strengthening practice in how the system provides early intervention support to children and young people before the point of involvement by Oranga Tamariki. <p>This working is being considered as part of the work underway in response to the Dame Karen Poutasi review.</p> | |
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