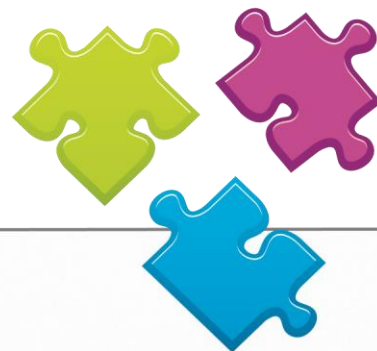


CHS Area Support Team/SCRA Locality Operating Framework

Working Together



children's
hearings
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What is the purpose of an CHS AST / SCRA Locality Operating Framework

While the Children's Hearing System is going through a period of change to ensure we keep the promise to Scotland's infants, children and young people, we need to ensure the current service is as good as it can be. This operating framework is an update on a set of core expectations which was first set out in 2014. It is the terms of the engagement and working relationship between Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) Area Support Teams (ASTs) and the Scottish Children's Reporters Administration (SCRA) and Localities as seen by the Principal Reporter and the National Convener. The framework is aimed at being flexible and agile and seeks to empower local managers and volunteers in leadership roles to work from within it.

Why do we need an Operating Framework?

The Children's Hearings System is a highly devolved structure across Scotland's 32 Local Authority areas. SCRA operates 9 localities and CHS supports 22 Area Support Teams across Scotland (see Appendix A for a breakdown of each Locality and the corresponding AST). SCRA and CHS have Head Offices based in Stirling and Edinburgh respectively.

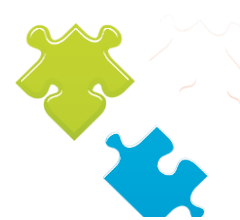
We need an operating framework to act as model of engagement between CHS ASTs and SCRA leaders locally but which reflects this high level of devolved responsibility. The framework sets out a blueprint for this engagement in the form of expectations within key themes. It's not designed to be detailed guidance that needs to be slavishly followed, but it does contain principles of best practice, which each area will pick up to a greater or lesser extent.

What are the key themes of the operating model?

Five key themes have been identified by a group of your SCRA and CHS AST peers, supported by the Principal Reporter and the National Convener. These themes provide the key touchstones of the local relationship and will be used as a basis to improve services and communication locally with the ultimate aim of delivering better outcomes for children and young people. The themes are:

1. Strong relationships;
2. Inspired leadership;
3. Learning together;
4. Driving partnerships; and
5. Improving performance.

Each thematic area is broken down further overleaf.



Strong Relationships

Strong, trusting, respectful and supportive relationships at an AST and Locality level lie at the centre of this operating framework. They are critical to the success and wellbeing of the Children's Hearings System locally. We believe that by working to resolve issues locally, and where possible informally, and by communicating effectively we will build a sustainable model of respect and trust in which we can focus our energy on improving outcomes for children.

AST/ASIP/Locality Teams

- Role model positive behaviours and challenge poor and negative behaviours.
- Where possible positively resolve issues of disagreement or concerns locally, in the spirit of continuous learning and improvement.
- Create a culture and environment of constructive feedback and challenge.

Inspired Leadership

You are leaders in the Children's Hearings System and guardians of its ethos and history and we need you to inspire colleagues locally. Your individual and collective leadership will drive improvement through the way you set out the priorities and direction of travel, how you lead, support and manage your colleagues and how you influence and deliver improvement.

AST/ASIP/Locality Teams

- Clearly set out the direction of travel in delivering CHS and SCRA's overall vision for the Hearing System.
- Are innovative and bold, driving forward new ideas.
- Involve children and young people locally to inform ideas.

Learning Together

Continuous improvement is about the constant need for learning and development. We believe that by sharing research and information from Audits and Inspections we can broaden our knowledge of the system and apply that learning locally in the pursuit of better outcomes for children and young people.

AST/ASIP/Locality Teams

- Organise and participate in joint and shared learning and development opportunities.
- Share research, experience and skills and are open to new ideas and thinking.
- Respond to the learning needs of the local area.
- Work jointly to promote improvement locally within the Children's Hearing System.



Driving Partnerships

Improved outcomes for children and young people within the Children's Hearings System can only be delivered in partnership with other agencies. We believe that by collaborating locally we can drive our relationships with our partners forward by sharing information and local data to help inform discussions and compare ourselves to the best elsewhere. You offer our partners relevant skills and experience, access to information, data and research within a context of mutual support.

AST/ASIP/Locality Teams

- Are clear on what it is we want from each of our partners and what specifically we want to improve.
- Use data and other sources of evidence routinely and systematically to inform discussions locally.
- Support each other and pursue joined up solutions to local issues and difficulties.

Improving Performance

Managing and improving the local performance of the Children's Hearings System is a cornerstone of the relationship between the AST and the Locality. Local performance has many dimensions and it will be up to each area to assess their performance against the national picture and local context before building plans to improve. The Locality Managers and the ASTs should share their data reports, which will enable identification of areas for local improvement

AST/ASIP/Locality teams

- Agree shared priorities and performance improvement targets.
- Share information and performance reports and monitor performance. Examples of information sharing can be: hearing scheduling, cancellations, appeals, deferrals etc.
- Report progress annually to the Principal Reporter and the National Convener.



National Supports and Local Meetings

National Supports

SCRA and CHS each have formal mechanisms in place for managing SCRA Localities and supporting CHS ASTs according to their individual needs and requirements. SCRA has in place a range of policies and protocols for the governance and management of the organisation's functions and the performance of Localities and their staff teams.

CHS has a support structure in place for the volunteers who fulfil leadership roles and delegated National Convener functions within the ASTs.

This framework promotes the opportunity for you to engage national supports from either SCRA or CHS to progress joint areas of work locally. There is a range of specialist staff available that could either support you directly by attending meetings and providing advice or by preparing short reports or presentations on your behalf on key issues. In addition, the Principal Reporter and/or the National Convener would be happy to attend any meeting if that would be helpful.

National support is available in the following areas:

- Research;
- Performance Management and analysis;
- Practice and procedure;
- Partnership engagement and Community Planning;
- External and internal Communications;
- Engagement of children and young people;
- Training and development; including Information Technology;
- Human Resources;
- Complaints handling;
- Information Governance and Data Protection.

You should discuss your requirements locally and agree requests for support from SCRA and/or CHS.



Joint Meetings

The Locality Reporter Manager (LRM) and the Area Convener (AC) are responsible for leading the Locality and AST and will work with colleagues in their management teams to deliver the aims of this framework. The joint AST/Locality team is likely to include the Locality Reporter Manager (LRM), Locality Support Manager (LSM), Area Convener (AC), Area Support Improvement Partner (ASIP), Depute Area Convener (DAC) and Lead Panel Representative (LPR).

Whilst it is crucial to have a management/leadership team; it is recognised that there will be different sub-group structures designed to support individual local needs. Management/leadership teams will agree, facilitate and manage the engagement model which best reflects how the CHS ASTs and SCRA Localities will operate in their local context. It is also important to recognise that a single Locality could work with up to six different ASTs. A written agreement about the meeting structure between the Locality and the AST will ensure roles are understood and expectations are clear.

Management/leadership meetings will discuss strategic and high-level operational issues with more sensitive issues discussed on a one-to-one basis. Meetings will happen at least quarterly and they should be recorded by an action note. Broadly speaking, these meetings will discuss the same topics. A copy of suggested topics is attached as Appendix B.

Key responsibilities of the management team include:

- Planning, organisation and management of meetings;
- Following through on allocated actions;
- Sourcing specialist SCRA/CHS resources to support local initiatives;
- Communicating decisions of the management/leadership team

Monitoring and Review

The Area Convener, Locality Reporter Manager and Area Support Improvement Partner will review implementation of this framework annually, looking at how this framework is operating.

Where particular issues arise locally, the Area Convener or relevant AST representatives, Locality Reporter Manager and Area Support Improvement Partner will attempt to resolve them through dialogue and negotiation. In the event that this is not possible, they should refer the situation to the Head of Area Support and Improvement at CHS or the appropriate SCRA Senior Operational Manager (SOM).

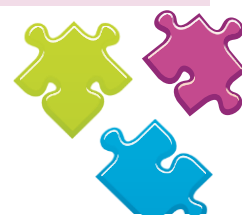
References:

- [AST roles and responsibilities](#)
- [Practice Guidance on the Management and Scheduling of Children's Hearings](#)



Appendix A - List of Localities and ASTs

<p>Highlands and Islands Locality</p> <p>(Comprising Highland; Moray; Eilean Siar; Orkney; and Shetland Local Authorities)</p>	<p>Highland and Moray AST Eilean Siar AST Orkney AST Shetland AST</p>
<p>Grampian Locality</p> <p>(Comprising Aberdeen; Aberdeenshire City Local Authorities)</p>	<p>Aberdeen City AST Aberdeenshire AST</p>
<p>North Strathclyde Locality</p> <p>(Comprising Renfrewshire; East Renfrewshire; East Dunbartonshire; West Dunbartonshire; Inverclyde; and Argyll & Bute Local Authorities)</p>	<p>Renfrewshire AST East Renfrewshire AST East Dunbartonshire AST West Dunbartonshire AST Inverclyde AST Argyll and Bute AST</p>
<p>Glasgow Locality</p> <p>(Comprising Glasgow City Local Authority)</p>	<p>Glasgow City AST</p>
<p>Tayside and Fife Locality</p> <p>(Comprising Dundee; Perth and Kinross; Fife; and Angus Local Authorities)</p>	<p>Tayside AST Fife AST</p>
<p>South East Locality</p> <p>(Comprising Edinburgh; Scottish Borders; East Lothian; and Midlothian Local Authorities)</p>	<p>Edinburgh AST South East Scotland AST</p>
<p>Central Locality</p> <p>(Comprising Falkirk; Stirling; Clacks and West Lothian Local Authorities)</p>	<p>Central and West Lothian AST</p>
<p>Lanarkshire/Dumfries and Galloway Locality</p> <p>(Comprising North Lanarkshire; South Lanarkshire; and Dumfries & Galloway Local Authorities)</p>	<p>North Lanarkshire AST South Lanarkshire AST Dumfries and Galloway AST</p>
<p>Ayrshire Locality</p> <p>(Comprising East Ayrshire; North Ayrshire; and South Ayrshire Local Authorities)</p>	<p>Ayrshire AST</p>



Appendix B - Suggested Topics for Agendas

1. Performance Management – for example:
 - Hearing Scheduling
 - Appeals
 - Deferrals
 - Complaints

2. Practice – for example:
 - Hearings Management
 - Practice Issues
 - Practice Updates
 - Sharing good practice

3. Partnership Working

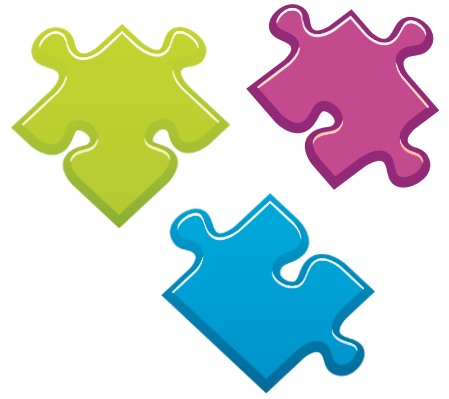
4. Training

5. Property Issues - for example:
 - Health and Safety
 - Hearing Centre Issues

6. Digital

These are suggested merely as areas of good practice to discuss. Your local needs will determine the size and scope of your agenda.





SCRA : www.scra.gov.uk

LHS: www.chscotland.gov.uk

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