

LEARNING BRIEF

Rapid Review—Baby A*

February 2021

The purpose of this learning brief is to share learning following the review into the death of a new-born baby who will be known as Baby A (*name has been changed).

Background

The body of a baby was found in a garden in December 2020. The mother and her partner were located following a local media appeal. No agencies were aware of the pregnancy.

Professional Curiosity

Professional curiosity is a communication skill which involves looking, listening, asking direct questions and reflecting on information received. Practitioners must keep an open mind when working with vulnerable people and consider alternative possibilities to the information presented, not accepting things at face value.

Key Messages and Areas of Learning

- **Undisclosed pregnancy**—no agency was notified by Baby A's mother or her partner that she was pregnant. **Professional curiosity** may have given Baby A's mother the opportunity to acknowledge her pregnancy.
- Two different agencies spoke to the partner of Baby A's mother rather than with Baby A's mother herself. Best practice is to **speak directly with the patient** but if this is not possible it is imperative to document why.
- **Possible pregnancy should be considered** in all women of child bearing age who present with any symptom that could relate to pregnancy. The algorithm when someone calls NHS 111 with haematuria has already changed nationally to include a question about pregnancy.

The Child Protection Procedures Manual for the South West Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships has a chapter on Concealed Pregnancy.

Positive Practice Points

- Baby A's mother's symptoms and a call to NHS111 were communicated swiftly between NHS 111 and the GP practice which is evidence of good information sharing.
- After thorough analysis of the information known at the time of the incident, the review group concluded that we could not have prevented this tragedy from occurring.



For consideration...

SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

We must take this opportunity to assure ourselves that members of our community are able to recognise the potential for harm from pregnancy concealment, non-disclosure or denial and take appropriate action when necessary and increase public and professional awareness of vulnerability for mothers and their babies' health where pregnancy is suspected to be denied, concealed or undisclosed.