

Workforce Brief No.3

Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM)

Audience

- Professionals with lead responsibilities for child protection
- Practitioners required to contribute towards child protection processes
- Senior managers across all agencies,

Moray Children Services Partnership began implementing the National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland (2021) on 15 August 2022

We would like to inform you about improvements to our child protection processes over the coming months as part of the implementation program.

The Scottish Child Interview Model is now live in Moray.

The 'Scottish Child Interview Model' (SCIM)

A new national approach as to how we interview child victims and witnesses is being rolled out across Scotland. The Scottish Child Interview Model for Joint Investigative Interviews is a model of practice which is trauma-informed and aims to minimise the risk of further traumatisation, while seeking to achieve best evidence through improved planning and interview techniques.

The aim of the Scottish Government is that all Joint Interviews will be carried out using the Scottish Child Interview Model by 2024. It is hoped that in future the improved quality of evidence will prevent the need for children to have to give evidence in person as part of court or children's hearing processes.

The North East SCIM Team

Aberdeenshire, Moray and Aberdeen have agreed a centralised hub for broad co-ordination, debrief, data collection, training and quality assurance but with practitioners based within their own local authority areas, aligned with local management and support structures.

The North East SCIM Team was established in November 2022 and consists of 14 SCIM Practitioners from Police and Social Work. Four of the SCIM Practitioners are based in Moray Joint Child Protection Unit with "soft boundaries" in place across the three local authority areas to ensure a flexible and responsive specialist service.

During the implementation period the pre-existing model of Joint Investigative Interviews (JII) will continue to be undertaken in some instances. The model of interview utilised will be decided by the SCIM Co-ordinators following the Interagency Referral Discussion. JII refresher training will remain available and has been updated to bring the current JII model more in line with SCIM.



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Undertaking Joint Interviews

Joint Interviews are undertaken by a police officer and social worker in order to:

- Learn the child's account of the circumstances that prompted the enquiry
- Gather information to permit decision-making on whether the child in question, or any other child, is in need of protection
- Gather sufficient evidence to suggest whether a crime may have been committed against the child or anyone else
- Secure best evidence as needed for court proceedings, such as a criminal trial or a children's hearing proof

The main criteria for the SCIM approach to be used primarily depends upon the individual support needs of a child/young person. However, cases may typically involve sexual abuse/exploitation, serious physical assault, and progression to the High Court.

When a case is allocated to the SCIM team, a police and social work interviewer will work collaboratively to plan, prepare, and carry out relevant interviews. A detailed plan for the child's needs is developed based on information provided by IRD participants, and importantly from discussions with people who know the child well. Following the interview a debrief will take place with the child's allocated social worker/team, and a summary of information/disclosure will be provided alongside the plan of child's needs form.

What does this mean for Staff?

Current JII trained Police and Social Workers will see a reduction in the amount of JIIs they are asked to organise.

Practitioners may be contacted and consulted with during the planning stages of a SCIM interview.

Agency specific queries can be directed to your child protection representative:

Education: Lynne Riddoch & Hazel Sly

Social Work: Donna Borek & Lizette Van Zyl

Police: Caroline Gray

Health: Joanna McCauley

Or email mcpc@moray.gov.uk with your questions and feedback.



Workforce briefings for the implementation of the [National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland 2021](#) in Moray.

Brought to you on behalf of the Moray Child Protection Committee.

