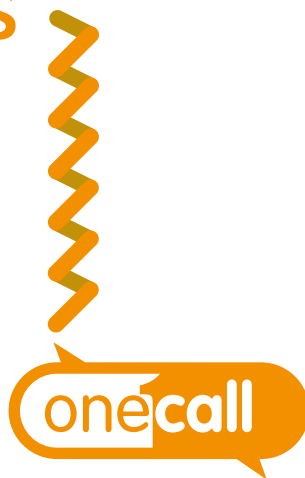


NORTHUMBERLAND MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB (MASH)

A GUIDE FOR PROFESSIONALS



What is a MASH?

A Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for Northumberland has been set up to deal with safeguarding concerns about a child or adult. The MASH involves different agencies working together in the same location and sharing information to provide a faster more coordinated approach to investigate reports of abuse or neglect of a child or adult.

You should report any safeguarding concerns about a child or adult to OneCall: the single point of contact for children's services and adult social care.

The MASH deals with all cases which have been assessed as meeting the safeguarding threshold.

This leaflet provides a guide for professionals about how the MASH works.

Who is in the MASH team?

The MASH team includes multi-disciplinary professionals from Northumbria Police, Northumberland County Council and Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. This includes social workers, detectives and researchers.

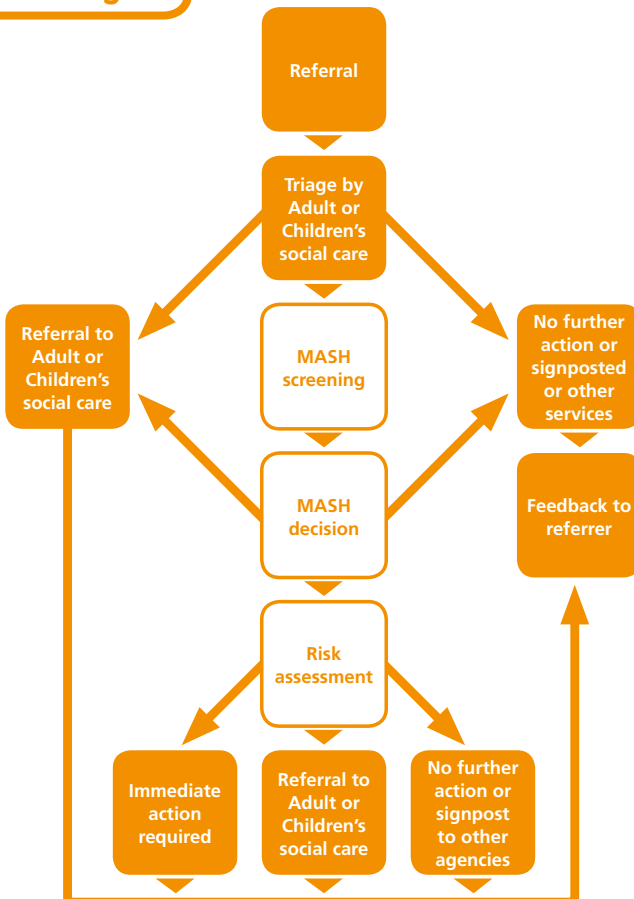
The MASH also works closely with the National Probation Service, Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, Northumbria Community Rehabilitation Company, Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service and NHS England in the management and handling of safeguarding referrals.

The co-location of the MASH team has meant that we can quickly assess risk, based on the fullest information known across all agencies, to determine if the child or adult is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. It will also maintain a confidential record system of activity and disseminate suitable information to teams involved for action.

How does the MASH process work?

1. If a case is referred to MASH, the team manager will prioritise referrals for information sharing using a RAG (red, amber or green) rating.
2. Staff from the relevant agencies in the MASH will gather and share information they have about the child or adult and anyone else affected securely to enable an informed decision to be made as quickly as possible.
3. Feedback on the outcomes of the MASH process will be sent to the person who made the referral.

MASH process diagram



What are the possible outcomes of the MASH process?

Responses from the MASH can include no further action, the provision of advice and information to the referrer, a referral to early help and prevention services, a strategy discussion/meeting or an assessment.

How long does it typically take to make a decision?

MASH decisions will be made within the timescale of the RAG rating (2 hours for Red, 4 hours for Amber and 8 hours for Green).

What happens if the child or adult already has a social worker?

If there is an allocated social worker for the child, they are considered the best person to support them or their family so the case will be directly referred to the children social care locality team. If there is no social worker involved with the child then the referral will be managed by Onecall. All safeguarding referrals for adults will be managed through Onecall.

How will the child, adult or family be involved in the MASH process?

We will always aim to gain consent from parents and adults where appropriate and safe to do so.

The MASH will involve children, adults and families in the process by making sure they are kept informed of any decisions made.

Feedback will include if any actions are required, if an assessment will be carried out or if it is recommended early help and prevention services are suitable.

MASH data sharing and fair processing

There is an information sharing agreement in place in the MASH which details partner agencies responsibilities to share information and the legal basis for doing so.

All partner agencies are required to ensure staff are fully trained and aware of their responsibilities under GDPR. It is the responsibility of all professionals to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities to ensure they are able to respond within set RAG timescales to enquiries from the MASH and to safeguard children and adults.

How to make a referral

If you are worried that a child or adult is at risk of being abused or neglected call Onecall on the number below (24/7 phone line).

You can contact the MASH team by calling Onecall.

They operate Monday-Thursday 08:30-17:00 and 08:30-16:30 on Friday.

Outside of these hours, concerns about the care and/or welfare of a child or adult that requires an immediate response should be reported to the Emergency Duty Team via Onecall or call 999 in an emergency, for example where someone's life is at risk or someone is injured or critically ill.



01670 536 400

Text phone 01670 536 844