REVIEW OF SAFEGUARDING REVIEW METHODOLOGIES

COMPARISON OF TRADITIONAL CASE REVIEW METHODOLOGY AND WELSH MODEL SERIOUS CASE REVIEW METHODOLOGY

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BACKGROUND

- Lancashire Safeguarding Board implemented a new Welsh methodology for conducting their Adult and Child Serious Case Reviews.

- Commissioned University of Chester to evaluate the Welsh method against the traditional review process.

  - Exploration of benefits and detriments of each model

  - Understand impact of using the new methodology on the reviews produced

  - Assess the relative cost benefits of implementing each

METHODOLOGY

- Three stage approach:
  - Face to face interviews / telephone interviews
    - Interviews with nine members of staff involved in delivering Reviews
  - Content analysis
    - Analysis of the documentation associated with three traditional model SCRs and three Welsh model SCRs (no SARs done to old methodology for comparison)
  - Cost Benefit Analysis
    - Survey developed to gather data on time and cost associated with producing the traditional model SCRs and the Welsh model SCRs

STAGE 1: INTERVIEWS – TRADITIONAL MODEL OVERVIEW

- Overview report often 100-200 pages long
- Executive summary
- Independent author – owned report and considerable variation in production of report
- Individual agencies complete IMR including chronology
  - Workers and agencies involved in the case excluded from the process
  - Completed by independent author, outside of the team or locality involved in case
  - Chronologies labour intensive
  - Paper based exercise, database dump of case involvement - no discussion
- Integration of IMRs and subsequent discussion by senior managers at group meetings
- For child review, submitted to Ofsted for evaluation
- Deficit model - leaning towards blame culture
- No method, just a process
- 12-18 months in production

STAGE 1: INTERVIEWS – WELSH MODEL OVERVIEW

- Report 20-30 pages long

- Learning brief - short summary for practitioners, senior staff etc.

- Independent author. Access to trained authors – only take people who have done training, and initially there was a limited pool. This has improved.

- Timeline Practitioner event including agencies and staff involved in case – more ownership and involvement in review. Practitioners not managers - report co-produced with practitioners

- Underpinning methodology and supports alearning culture

- 6-8 months in production

STRUCTURE OF CHRONOLOGY / TIMELINE

- Traditional model chronologies – not tightly focussed

    - Narrative of the case

    - Very detailed, including irrelevant information

    - Sometimes included whole life timeline – this was then narrowed down after chronology had been reviewed, therefore wasting resources on compiling irrelevant detail.

    - Focussed on identifying gaps, not about good practice

- *"More on identifying gaps, but you would never talk about good practice"*

Participant D

STRUCTURE OF CHRONOLOGY / TIMELINE

- Welsh model timeline

  - Key incidents and learning

  - Solution focussed - identify gaps and good practice

  - Two types of timeline for review – concise (12months) and extended (24 months)

  - Tightly focussed on period being reviewed. Additional information can be included, but only if felt to be relevant

  - Some felt there needed to be a chronology to set parameters for reviewers - adapted Welsh method to include short chronology

- *"It's not anywhere close to the level of work that was required in an IMR, and I've seen that we're still able to highlight the significant events and pull out the analysis as much as we were with the Traditional IMR" -*   *Participant F*

GOVERNANCE: TRADITIONAL

- Author of review 'owned' the review

  - Selected from small pool of authors

  - No official contract, or maybe one page, in place.

  - Daily rate for the work

- Little or no involvement of the practitioners in the case

- *"The only thing that would make you know that your case was subject to a serious case review was someone would seize and seal your file and then you wouldn't hear anything else until it was published" - Participant A*

GOVERNANCE: TRADITIONAL

- Single agency and multiagency recommendations
  - Sometimes 30+ recommendations
  - No action plans – so may be a broad recommendation, but not how to implement
- SCR panel responsible for developing action plans
- Reviews (child) graded and rated by Ofsted – dictated what was included
- Safeguarding board – publish review and ensure timely implementation of action plans
- Blame culture – risk of looking to deflect from own agency

GOVERNANCE: WELSH MODEL

- Independent author
  - From much wider pool – want to balance independence and experience
  - Bid process for the work – semi interview
  - More robust contract – including performance measures and cost ceiling
- Production of timeline – high support, high challenge from safeguarding team

- *"So one of main things is high support, high challenge, so we will compete those chronology or time lines in the first instance, alongside somebody from the network, and constantly we're challenging." - Participant C*

GOVERNANCE: WELSH MODEL

- Need to ensure professional accountability, but separate from review process

- Attendees at practitioner event
  - Need consistency, relevancy and forward communication of the event.

- *"There is a risk of the learning being limited to those who are at the event"*

Participant A

GOVERNANCE: WELSH MODEL

- Report focussed mainly on multi-agency recommendations
  - Some concern that individual agencies are responsible for looking at their own practice and actioning their own recommendations – how to ensure they are doing this?

- *"Sometimes a problem at interagency level has its roots in an individual agency, and if we do not include single agency recommendations in the report we risk losing the opportunity to change underlying factors which could have an impact on interagency working."*

Participant G

GOVERNANCE: WELSH MODEL

- Concern over detachment of senior management from process
  - In traditional IMR the review was signed off by assistant director or director level

- Some challenges by local coroners, who expect to be able to use chronology in their work, and find new timeline not detailed enough

- Some concern that actions were being delayed until publication of the review in Welsh model, unlike with the traditional SCR where actions could be implemented during the process – this was not universal

GOVERNANCE

- Both models – formulating SMART recommendations and outcomes still a weakness

- Sub-groups seen as functional, to get the review completed, ensure good quality and learning outcomes and action plans are put in place
  - Don't always recognise their governance and accountability function

- In both, reviews can be subject to delays due to coroner's reports and court proceedings – sometimes inconsistency as to what is allowed, e.g. corruption of evidence is unlikely, but some investigating officers won't take the risk.

OUTPUTS / OUTCOMES: TRADITIONAL

- Traditional:
  - Reports lengthy – can lose focus, not accessible, inconsistent styles
  - Rigorous process and detailed output, but only included recorded practice and sometimes didn't get to heart of the problem.
  - Huge amount of personal detail on lives of those involved and offences – had to redact most to avoid identifying people and avoid criminal offence.
  - Report presented to board, discussed and action plan developed – not RAG rated or monitored

OUTPUTS / OUTCOMES: TRADITIONAL

- Recommendations numerous (25-30) but sometimes very general, unrealistic and not easy to implement, e.g. change national legislation. Author led.

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- *"Reports weren't thinking in terms of how are you going to implement the recommendation you're making, or being very clear about what the recommendation was, so they weren't clear what the requirement was"*

- *"Agencies would take them away and had this mad frenzy to try and get as much done, or produce as much evidence as they could"*

Participant D

OUTPUTS / OUTCOMES: WELSH MODEL

- Welsh:
  - Shorter reports – more accessible, service user voice more prominent but also some concern over brevity
  - 1-2 page learning briefs produced for practitioners or managers.
  - Recommendations and outcomes – fewer, SMARTer, more realistic. SCR panel, business group and board have oversight.
  - Communication strategy is proactive and aligned for all agencies with ongoing engagement over issues identified, i.e. campaigns

- *"I have to confess the initial reaction was, these can't be good enough because they're so short"*

BUT

- *"It's much easier to talk through a ten page report that they understand, they can read themselves, rather than going with a massive lengthy tome of a document…….my test is, anybody who doesn't know anything about that case should be able to pick up the report, read it and understand the case completely" - Participant E*

STAGE 2: CONTENT ANALYSIS

Report	Report length (pages)	Average (pages)	Report length (word count)	Average (word count)
Child N (Traditional)	66		36,478	
Child O (Traditional)	57	53.3 (56.6)	19,746	23,167
Child G (Traditional)	37		13,276	
Child LA (Welsh)	25		13,622	
Child LC (Welsh)	14	29.6 (31)	5,109	11,253
Child LE (Welsh)	50		15,028	

READABILITY

Case	Readability score[1]	Grade level[2]
Child N (Traditional)	38.7	13.3
Child O (Traditional)	41.9	13.0
Child G (Traditional)	37.6	13.3
Child LA (Welsh)	39.1	14.0
Child LC (Welsh)	47.1	11.7
Child LE (Welsh)	46.3	11.6

[1] Readability score is taken from Word reading statistics: Flesch Reading Ease test.
This test rates text on a 100-point scale. The higher the score, the easier it is to understand the document. For most standard files, you want the score to be between 60 and 70.
[2] Grade level is taken from the Word reading statistics: Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level test
This test rates text on a U.S. school grade level. For example, a score of 8 means that an eighth grader can understand the document. For most documents, aim for a score of approximately 7 to 8.

HOURS SPENT ON EACH CASE

	Traditional method			Welsh model		
	Child N	Child O	Child G	Child LA	Child LE	Child LC
Total hours Respondent	452.50	147.00	470.00	166.88	76.00	180.50
Total hours Additional	344.00	199.50	378.00	41.88	12.00	31.17
Total hours	796.50	346.50	848.00	208.76	88.00	211.67
Average hours per person	79.65	49.50	53.00	20.88	10.60	21.17
Average hrs /person by method	60.72			17.55		
Average total hrs by method	<u>663.67</u>			<u>169.48</u> (This figure is 25.5% of the Traditional Model Average hours)		

NB. Where there was missing data in the original data set, e.g. a respondent had stated they spent 10hrs in meetings, but had not given their salary costing for this, we used an average of the total data provided for that case to substitute in the missing data.

HOURLY COSTS OF CASE

	Traditional method			Welsh model		
	Child N	Child O	Child G	Child LA	Child LE	Child LC
Total cost respondents	£14,184.02	£6,615.00	£22,343.00	£4,625.80	£1,866.46	£4,475.55
Total cost others	£10,089.98	£8,977.50	£20,703.00	£1,337.37	£284.00	£772.93
Average hourly rate	£31.87	£45.00	£54.67	£31.93	£24.60	£24.80
Average hourly rate by method	£43.84			£27.11 (This figure is 61.8% less than the Traditional Model Average /hr)		

TOTAL CALCULATED COSTS OF CASE / MODEL

	Traditional method			Welsh model		
	Child N	Child O	Child G	Child LA	Child LE	Child LC
Total cost (of responding team)	£24,274.00 (7 of 14)	£15592.50 (5 of 10)	£43046.00 (9 of 14)	£5963.17 (5 of 7)	£2150.46 (4 of 9)	£5248.48 (7 of 7)
Total cost (of full team)	£48,548.01 (14 of 14)	£31,185.00 (10 of 10)	£66,960.44 (14 of 14)	£8,348.44 (7 of 7)	£4,838.535 (9 of 9)	£5,248.48 (7 of 7)
Reviewer cost	£35,757.40	£13,737.28	£12,639.37	£8,809.50	£8,300.00	£5,454.28
Venue / food cost	£670.45	£0.00	£0.00	£106.25	£106.25	£118.00
Final total for case	£84,975.86	£44,922.28	£79,599.81	£17,264.19	£13,244.79	£10,820.76
Total of model	£209,497.95			£41,329.73		
80% confidence interval	£167,598.36 - £251,397.54			£33,063.78 - £49,595.68		
Average	£69,832.65			£13,776.58 (This figure is 80.27% less than the Traditional Cost)		
80% confidence interval	£55,866.12- £83,799.18			£11,021.26 - £16,531.90		

KEY FINDINGS

- The evidence points to significant advantages of the Welsh model compared to the Traditional Model at three levels: clarity of purpose, resource (time), and economic cost.

- The data triangulated (interviews content analysis and economic costs) suggests the Welsh reports are shorter in length (whilst not losing rigour and clarity); are significantly less resource intensive, and costs less to commission.

- On average, the Welsh model can produce a report in a quarter of the time required for a Traditional Report and at one third of the cost.