

## Chronology Guidance

The purpose of a chronology is to record **significant** concerns, events or incidents that impact (positively or otherwise) on a child or young person's wellbeing.

A **single-agency chronology** provides a brief description and summarised account of significant events relevant to a child. It should be used as an analytical tool to support the understanding of the impact of life events. A single-agency chronology is created when there are concerns about a child that will impact on their wellbeing. Where appropriate, a single-agency chronology should accompany a referral to social work.

An **integrated chronology** is produced as part of a specific multi-agency intervention and will include information extracted from single-agency chronologies that is **relevant, necessary, legitimate, appropriate** and **proportionate**. It is advised that **Integrated Chronology Meetings** (Appendix 1) are held at an early stage of multi-agency involvement with a child.

### **A chronology:**

- ✓ is an essential tool for best practice in assessment, analysis, and decision making
- ✓ is an aid to effective partnership working and discussion with families
- ✓ is factual, accurate and evidence based;
- ✓ supports workers to maintain focus on the child.
- ✓ is in a neutral language, suitable for practitioners and families to understand;
- ✓ is presented in time and date order starting with the earliest available information;
- ✓ is concise – if every concern, event or milestone and circumstance is recorded then the chronology loses its value and impact
- ✓ provides an early indication of an emerging pattern of need, concerns, and/or risks.

All columns should be completed within the chronology template.

## Integrated Chronology Meetings

Where a child has been allocated a Lead Professional, an **Integrated Chronology** will be established. Best practice would involve the lead professional and/or team manager convening a **Chronology Meeting** for the professional network around the child to come together as a group to share information. Integrated Chronology meetings can be held at any point and are of particular relevance when children are in need of protection; identified as needing a multi-agency child's plan and/or have been accessing services over many years.

1. All agencies will prepare their **Single-Agency** chronologies prior to the meeting. Professionals should note that some information in the Single Agency chronology may not be relevant to an integrated chronology; professional judgement will be required when assessing relevance to the purpose for which it is required. Care should be taken not to produce unmanageable lists of events that make it impossible to identify risks or patterns of behaviour.

\*Please note Police Scotland will share relevant information from their chronology on the National system and Health will use their health chronology as seen on their system.

2. At the Chronology Meeting each worker will share information that is **relevant, necessary, legitimate, appropriate** and **proportionate**, starting with the agency who has had the earliest involvement with the family. The information shared should include the date; the significant event; the source of the information and the Impact/Outcome for the child. Any gaps in information (such as moves to other authorities) should be noted and followed up if deemed necessary.
3. The Lead Professional will be responsible for the collation of the Single-Agency Chronologies into an Integrated Chronology that will inform the child's assessment. They will hold responsibility for the regular review and maintenance of the Integrated Chronology throughout the span of the multi-agency Child's Plan and for as long as the Lead Professional role is required.
4. **Each agency representative should continue to add to their Single-Agency Chronology**, which may have a specific focus for that particular agency, for example, the child's education. They should also advise the Lead Professional of any events significant to the Integrated Chronology at the date they learn of them, so that these are also included in the Integrated Chronology.
5. **The child and family must be involved in the process of integrating information.** Their views on what constitutes a significant event are key; sharing and discussing the integrated chronology with them is a core part of the assessment process.

## Child/Young Person's Chronology of Significant Events

*(Start at the most relevant point in family history. This may include pre-birth, parental or sibling history)*

Date or period of event	Significant Event	Source	Impact/Outcome
The date the event occurred	<p>A brief description of the event should be recorded here. The language should be in plain English, non-judgemental, clear and concise. Entries could be a summary of a pattern of behaviour e.g. failure to attend/rearranged appointments or services; school exclusions; refused access to child/household.</p> <p>An entry may include significant changes (both positive and negative) in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the child/young person's wellbeing;</li> <li>the parent/carer's wellbeing which impacts on the child/young person;</li> <li>the family household/housing circumstances, e.g. separation, divorce, bereavement, birth of a sibling, new partner, house move;</li> <li>the child's legal status e.g. Compulsory Supervision Order; Looked After Child;</li> <li>professional staff or services accessed by the child/young person or family</li> </ul> <p>An entry may also include information received from other services e.g. Police Child Concern Report (record the reference number from the PCCR).</p>	Record who/where the information has come from.	<p>Note the impact on the child. This could be updated at a later date if the impact is not immediately apparent.</p> <p>Include what happened as a result of the event and actions taken</p>