



# Our Camden Model of Social Work Charter

## Aims

- Agreed by staff across the service to help make clear our vision for social work practice in Camden
- Clearly sets out how we will promote an environment where systemic social work can thrive
- Enables staff to hold one another accountable and ensure that our procedures and actions support our way of working.

## Vision

In order to support children and families to achieve positive changes, we as Camden social workers need to feel valued and to develop our skills as confident agents of change.

### **We feel that adhering to the principles of our systemic social work model enables us to:**

- Enjoy our work a little more
- Feel confident in our skills
- Feel supported by our peers
- Ensure positive outcomes for the children and families we work with.

### **We want to acknowledge that:**

- The move to a new way of working is a challenge for us all
- We are on a journey together
- We must not be afraid to make mistakes.

Most of us struggle to think and act systemically at times and this is ok. What is important is reflecting afterwards how things could have been and committing to trying to do things differently next time.

We are all committed to supporting our peers to improve their skills and knowledge, with the aim that no-one should feel anxious about not having had training in systemic principles or unsure about the concepts and our model of social work. Please speak to your teams and the systemic champions to receive support, training opportunities and guidance.

We therefore commit to the following principles and to working towards a systemic social work model.

## Principles

- We promote consistent, transparent relationships between social work services and families
- We take an appreciative stance to interactions and appraising the work of our peers and those whom we manage
- We prioritise our attendance at group reflective supervision. Whilst we appreciate that this group supervision is not the be all and end all of systemic practice, it is a key aspect of the model
- We take shared responsibility for decision-making, working collaboratively with partner agencies to creatively design interventions tailored to the unique needs of the children and family
- We support a learning culture. We prioritise training and we take time to evaluate after an event what we could have done differently
- We will continue to develop a culture in our organisation which focusses upon positive relationships that inspire trust and confidence
- We promote respectful professional challenge across the hierarchy but we appreciate that managers have to make decisions and that sometimes other staff may disagree with such decisions. When we make a decision as a manager we explain the reason for this and take the time to explain the context behind the decision where possible.

## Roles and responsibilities

### **The senior management team will:**

1. Ensure that formal systemic training continues to be provided for new and existing staff
2. Take an appreciative and curious stance when auditing and reviewing work
3. Highlight positive examples of systemic practice across the department
4. Protect the time for group reflective supervision at all levels of the organisational hierarchy
5. Where possible, involve the allocated social worker in a reflective discussion before a decision is made with regards to their case
6. Take the time to explain the context for their decision to colleagues, especially when there are differing views on case direction
7. Continue to work with the systemic champions to review departmental processes,

ensuring they are compatible with and promote our model of social work.

### **Team managers will:**

1. Protect the time for group reflective supervision at all levels of the organisational hierarchy
2. Facilitate reflective group supervision for the senior practitioners
3. Take time to explain the context for their decision to colleagues, especially when there are differing views on case direction
4. Ensure that team meetings adhere to the systemic principles
5. Ensure new staff are provided with an overview of systemic practice as part of their induction
6. Highlight positive examples of systemic practice across the department
7. Collate and analyse themes and patterns that emerge in reflective discussions.

### **Senior practitioners will:**

1. Facilitate and protect time for group reflective supervision. It is recognised that the senior practitioner is not an expert in systemic family therapy, but rather is a social worker who has been trained in utilising the systemic principles to improve social work reflective discussions and design creative systemic interventions
2. Bring the systemic rucksack to both individual and group supervisions and set out the cards to stimulate discussion and consideration of themes
3. Agree at each reflective group which cases will be discussed at the next session and which professionals from partner agencies should be invited
4. Follow up any themes or patterns that emerge with the team manager for reflection as a team
5. Ensure that some notes from each reflective group discussion are on the child's file, using the agreed template
6. Highlight positive examples of systemic practice across the department.

### **Social workers and personal advisors will:**

1. Ensure a cultural genogram / ecomap is completed when a case is opened or assessment begun, whether this is with child / family or foster carer/adopter
2. Be proactive in coming to managers with

an initial analysis of a case dilemma and a readiness to discuss this considering systemic concepts/perspectives.

3. Protect the time for attendance at group reflective discussions.
4. Explore the perspectives of wider family networks in assessment and intervention.
5. Take an appreciative stance when working with families, completing a tree of life with parents and children where appropriate, and ensuring that every family has access to a family group conference
6. Seek feedback from children and families on the usefulness of the support and intervention provided
7. Initiate reflective discussions with their professional network, particularly at key moments (when a case feels 'stuck'/ following a significant event / prior to a review).

#### **The Quality Assurance Unit will:**

1. Continue to work with the systemic champions to review departmental processes, ensuring they are compatible with and promote our model of social work
2. Take an appreciative and curious stance when chairing CP, CIN and LAC reviews and when auditing and reviewing casework.
3. Highlight positive examples of systemic practice across the department
4. Protect the time for attendance at group reflective discussions
5. Ensure that themes and patterns collated through the audit process are reviewed with the senior management team considering the systemic principles and that the learning from this feeds into the development of practice.

#### **Team meetings will adhere to our principles by:**

- Providing a space for team members to feel a sense of a shared responsibility and camaraderie where workers can share experiences in a trusting and supportive environment
- Remaining appreciative and curious as to barriers and challenges rather than blaming external forces and resorting to silo working
- Ensuring managers explain the context behind any significant decisions made
- Not being characterised by discussions and feedback as to successes or failures with regards to performance indicators

- Including a space to hear about positive success stories and highlighting everyday successful systemic practice
- Considering what the agenda will be for the next meeting. The culture of a team and its regular meetings are the responsibility of the whole team, not just the manager.

### **Simple ideas to utilise in team meetings**

- If a gap in skills or an area of weakness is identified in the team then the manager can ask the team to consider this dilemma in reflective groups and challenge them to think creatively as to what strengths and weaknesses they hold in this.
- Watching the following videos talks with the team and hold a reflective discussion afterwards as to what emotions these prompt and what thoughts ideas about practice this provokes.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCvmsMzIF7o>  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQEU\\_PsJ8WA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQEU_PsJ8WA)
- Use the circularity exercise to discuss an issue that is current in the team / service user group. One person starts giving their thoughts and hypothesis and when they have said as much or as little as they want the following person has to follow on with their own views, where they feel it is helpful or useful to do so, linking what they are saying the previous participants. This exercise doesn't need to stop at the end of one circle, it could go on and on until the thoughts and ideas are exhausted. This is a great way to make sure we are all listening to one another and that everyone has a fair opportunity to be heard.
- Systemic concept cards can be laid out and the team to consider which concept they want to explore as a group. Participants can give examples of ways that they have utilised this concept / principle in day to day life.