

**Protocol: Consultation offered to Children's Social Care Social Workers and Families First workers
by Families First/Social Care CFCS Team**

Newham Child and Family Consultation Service (CAMHS)
East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT)

The Families First/Social Care CFCS Team works closely with the Families First Teams and Children's Social Care Teams of the London Borough of Newham. The team offers consultation on child and family mental health issues to these teams as part of our role commissioned by the LBN.

We offer two types of consultation, referral consultation and case discussion (sometimes the purpose of consultation may be a mixture of both).

Emergencies:

In cases of emergency with high mental health risk (e.g. self-harm/suicidality/hearing voices), agencies should contact CFCS Duty Clinician immediately for advice on whether to make an urgent referral (Tel: 020 7055 8400), without going through the consultation process with the FF/SC CFCS Team.

Teams with Embedded CFCS clinicians:

For teams with embedded CFCS clinicians (all FF teams and some CSC teams), we offer a full range of consultation including referral consultation and case discussion. Consultation may take place on an individual basis with a consultee(s) or as part of team discussion.

- Consultation for the purpose of case discussion may involve providing mental health and therapeutic perspectives, information on CFCS input and a reflective safe space to discuss cases of children, young people families known to FF/CSC Teams.
- A consultation request should be directed to the allocated CFCS clinician of the team by telephone, email or direct contact.

Other teams :

For the teams without embedded clinicians, we offer referral consultations when a referral to CFCS is being considered or where there are child or parental mental health issues that the worker wishes to discuss in order to help clarify their assessment.

- The focus of referral consultation is to clarify a child/young person's mental health issues, what type of support they would benefit from and whether a referral to CFCS is needed.
- Consultation requests should be sent by email to NewhamCFCS@elft.nhs.uk with a **subject heading 'consultation request'** and a completed consultation request form attached.
- The mailbox is monitored daily by CFCS admin. Emails with this subject heading will be forwarded to FF/SC CFCS Team secretary, who will check whether the case is currently open to CFCS and/or allocate consultation requests to FF/SC Team clinicians.
- We will provide consultation within a maximum of 2 weeks of receiving the request and where possible sooner.
- Routine referrals sent directly to CFCS will be redirected to a consultation in the first instance

Underlying principles:

Consultation is not supervision, therapy or training, although it may have some elements of these.

The CFCS clinician offering consultation retains no clinical or statutory responsibility for the cases or issues that may be discussed and it is up to the consultee(s) to act on recommendations made during the consultation.

The core aim of the CFCS FF/SC clinicians is to create a quick and accessible means of advice and guidance on child and family mental health issues for all CSC/ Families First staff in order to ensure that CFCS services are accessed in a timely manner without unnecessary delays caused by unclear referrals.

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