

FINAL ABE ACTION PLAN – MARCH 2016

	ACTION	LEAD ORGANISATION	SUPPORTING ORGANISATION	DATE
1.	<p>Co-location of police and social work Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) interview practitioners</p> <p>PSNI and Trusts to actively consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the co-location of ABE interviewers and the nature of this; • what steps could be taken to improve joint working; and • what alternative systems could be introduced to facilitate this. 	Core Group – PSNI and Trusts		September 2016
2.	<p>Supervision and Quality Assurance</p> <p>PSNI and Trusts to consider how best to develop a supervisory/Quality Assurance role for those undertaking interviews and progress this. This should include consideration of social work access to relevant case material.</p>	Core Group – PSNI and Trusts (including through supervision arrangements)		December 2016
3.	<p>Interview Champion</p> <p>Interview Champion to be responsible for promoting and raising awareness, at a strategic level, of the importance of ABE witness interviews (including joint protocol). PSNI to raise awareness of the role of their Interview Champion. Trusts to consider the appointment of, including the appropriate level for, a Senior ‘Champion’ for strategic promotion of witness interviewing.</p>	PSNI and Trusts		September 2016
4.	<p>Senior Specialist Interviewer Contact</p> <p>Senior specialist interviewer to provide an operational single point of contact for those undertaking ABE interviews; a ‘go to’ person providing advice and support to ABE interviewers. PSNI and Trusts to consider and progress this role, making use of National Occupational Standards as</p>	PSNI and Trusts		March 2017

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	appropriate.			
5.	<p>Practitioners Forum</p> <p>Practitioners Forum to be established, building on experience that is already in place. To include social work practitioners, PSNI (including District ABE interviewers), Registered Intermediaries and NSPCC Young Witness Service staff. Consideration should also be given to the Forums meeting periodically at a regional level (perhaps annually). The Forums should share learning among practitioners, good practice and development across disciplines and stakeholder groups, establishing Terms of Reference related to this.</p>	Core Group – PSNI and Trusts		September 2016
6.1	<p>Trainees</p> <p>Provision to be made for newly qualified interviewers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ shadow experienced interviewers, to build confidence and learning; ➤ build up their experience and competence, as well as skill development, through the cases that they are allocated. This could for example involve beginning, wherever possible, with a less complicated case before progressing onto more complicated cases; and ➤ develop an interview portfolio over the first two years after training, including an evaluation component, to be signed off by management and recapped at the skills development course. <p>Aspects (i) and (ii) should be standard for those in police Public Protection Units and best practice for police districts where possible.</p> <p>Consideration to be given to how to progress this for social workers and appropriate action taken.</p> <p>Consideration to also be given to any issues relating to data protection,</p>	PSNI and Trusts		March 2017

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6.2	<p>information sharing and records management.</p> <p>‘Accredited’¹ ABE interviewer training to be established, incorporating the following requirements for police and social workers interviewers to retain ‘active’ status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertaking a minimum of two ABE interviews per year (one as lead); • having current and competent skills, demonstrated through an interview portfolio²; • undertaking a skills development course (which would incorporate current refresher training) once every two years, following initial training; and • a quality assurance function. <p>This would include police ABE interviewers that are not joint-protocol.</p>			
7.	<p>Training programme</p> <p>This should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ incorporate the use of, or access to, a range of examples of ABE interviews and the opportunities for learning, both positive and negative; ➤ raise awareness of the benefits of mental reinstatement of context and further promote where appropriate” ➤ emphasise five minute practice during rapport and reasons why this is good practice, where appropriate; ➤ further reinforce that social workers can lead an interview – acknowledging that it will ultimately be for the child to determine; ➤ include a short guide to practice interviews, which could take a 	PSNI and Trusts	NSPCC Young Witness Service and Registered Intermediaries	September 2016

¹ This does not require formal accreditation rather the aim is to reflect the importance of this area and the status that should be accorded to it, while ensuring that ABE interviewers are active in this field.

² Procedures to be drawn up on the interview portfolio, taking account of court disclosure issues.

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	<p>visual format, with input from Registered Intermediaries;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ develop a practical 'guide' on the use of drawing, body charts, diagrams, communication aids, etc., through a CPD event, and involve the use of Registered Intermediaries; and ➤ promote and advise on a toolkit of aids for interviewers, the involvement of Registered Intermediaries and The Advocate's Gateway. <p>It may be appropriate to incorporate some of these aspects into the revised Joint Protocol.</p>			
8.	<p>PPS Involvement</p> <p>Current liaison with PPS to be built upon with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ on-going liaison between interviewers and prosecutors, to build understanding of how ABEs are being used at court and how guidelines can be applied flexibly; and ➤ PPS advice and expertise on what generally tends to be good and bad in interviews to be fed back into ABE training, including, refresher training and the skills development course. ➤ PPS attending, if established, any annual practitioners forum. <p>Interview Champions to also disseminate information from PPS, as appropriate.</p>	PPS	PSNI and Trusts	September 2016

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9.	<p>Registered Intermediary involvement</p> <p>Training and procedural documentation (including PSNI practitioner guidance on Registered Intermediaries and Revision of Joint Protocol) to emphasise the need for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ consultation with a Registered Intermediary, where they are to be used, in the pre-interview assessment/planning stage;➤ good communication between all parties when organising Pre-Interview Assessments and ABE interviews, to ensure engagement with the Registered Intermediary;➤ a planning meeting and sharing questions with the Registered Intermediary before the ABE interview; and➤ practitioners to actively observe the Registered Intermediary's assessment. <p>A watching brief is also to be kept on the need for Registered Intermediaries to be debriefed, given the potential traumatic impact of cases.</p>	PSNI and Trusts	Registered Intermediaries	September 2016
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