

## **Serious Case Review fact sheet - Child U**

Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board commissioned a Serious Case Review following the death of Child U aged 10 weeks in September 2016. The full report will be published once criminal processes have been completed.

**Background:** Child U was a baby boy born to parents originally from the Ivory Coast. His Father had been in the UK since 2002 and had secured permanent residence, his Mother had entered the UK on a visitor's visa which had expired and she was therefore an over-stayer. Child U's Mother appropriately accessed ante-natal care during her pregnancy and no significant concerns were raised during this period. When Child U was 4 weeks old the family became homeless and were provided with temporary accommodation by Royal Greenwich. No concerns were raised until a couple of days after his 8 week check when Child U was brought into hospital in respiratory arrest with widespread brain injuries – he died 3 days later. Some inconsistencies have been noted in the parent's account of the sequence of events leading up to him becoming unresponsive, and medical examinations were highly indicative of non-accidental injury. In February 2019 Child U's Father was found not guilty of his murder, and the circumstances leading to his death remain undetermined.

### **Key issues:**

- Scope for greater professional curiosity about the significance of birth fathers / relevant men
- There could have been greater precision in record keeping
- Inconsistent recognition of the need for interpreters

### **Key learning:**

**The use of interpreters:** Professional opinion was divided over whether the Mother understood sufficient English, and at times Child U's Father was relied upon to interpret. Child U's Mother was already reliant upon him for accommodation and support due to her immigration status, and using him to interpret risked denying her a voice.

**Professional curiosity about fathers:** Professionals were not sufficiently curious about the father of the baby. Despite him being present at appointments most of the focus of assessments was on the Mother.

**Impact of Immunisations:** Communicating to parents that children may be more challenging to care for following immunisations, and advice being made available about the fragility of babies, coping with crying and parental stress.

### **Conclusion:**

The serious case review in relation to Child U found that there were no indications that he was more vulnerable than any other infant in a family facing homelessness, and that this tragic incident could not have been prevented by the professionals working with the family;

*“Even if every issue identified above had been managed faultlessly, there are no grounds for asserting that events would have unfolded in any significantly different way, far less that the tragic outcome would have been predicted or prevented”*