**Notes from the ASYE Best Practice Forum – 4.2.21**

This Best Practice Forum (BPF) was attended by 75 people. See attendance sheet below.



Because of COVID-19, this forum was run as a webinar for a shorter time from 10:30-12:00. Because the majority of time in the forum was in breakout rooms this meeting wasn’t recorded.

1. **Updates from Skills for Care** (see detail in slides below)

Ali Rusbridge started the forum and let people know that after 10 years facilitating forums and being the social work coordinator for London &SE, she was stepping down from this role and handing over to Selena Docherty. Ali was thanked for her work. Selena gave an update – see slides below



In the chat requests from the group relating to the updates included

* Can we have the ASYE forms available as an online submission, similar to what happens for apprenticeships, makes it easier for submitting portfolios, easier for panel members to read and for NQSW’s to submit rather than sending multiple files
* Could there be clarification about the national events (the link to book them was sent in the social work briefing) if they are now booked up how will those not able to attend find out what was discussed

A question was asked about who was still doing moderation panels and many said they were holding virtual internal panels. East Sussex County Council, Kent & Medway SE London and NW London said they had also held external moderation panels.

Challenges to overcome included -A challenge for experts by experience in terms of technology but it was possible. The files end up being too large, and some servers reject them

Solutions found included: portfolios allocated at least 3 weeks in advance, we sent out the portfolios to the assessors beforehand so they could read them prior to the panel, an e-submission system Logicom. We put our documentation into PDF's and circulated it one week in advance of the virtual panel

1. **Break out group discussion summary**.

The 7 break out rooms all looked at the question

‘What changes or lessons from the last year during the Pandemic will you be taking forward and implementing in future ASYE practice and planning?’

Feedback after discussions included the following points

* Important to use virtual rooms because of the lack of contact with team members – drop in / Q&A rooms for NQSWs to seek out support and ask questions so people can respond. Could be used in the future
* Making the best of technology – workshops have worked well and able to offer more workshops than previously and better take up and could fit them in as shorter and more flexibility. NQSWs found them very helpful. Group sessions for reflective supervision will also be taken forwards
* Having a mentor and a buddy for NQSWs – mentor is experienced social worker buddy is a recently successful NQSW works well. Challenge for NQSWs being involved in new teams and this helps them feel as much of ta part of the team as possible. Onboarding NQSWs as early on as can with HR
* Electronic portfolios started use of shared software for storing so accessible and can easily be passed onto panels and will be continued
* Direct observations virtually and using WhatsApp for video calls where assessors can observe has worked well
* Had to take more account of peoples feeling and vulnerabilities – had to put on more wellbeing sessions and enabled more sharing
* Keeping all the new ways of working going and making the most of successful use of technology to make everyone’s life easier
* Recording review meetings so NQSW's can go back and refresh their understanding

1. **Social Work England**

Julie Campbell - Regional Engagement Lead London and Kate Metcalf - Regional Engagement Lead South East gave a presentation

See slides



Questions were asked

1. Can I ask about the reduction in placement days (SW students)? It appears that HEI's are reducing the days on placements without consultation with the placement. We have had the days reduced and we are able to fulfil the full placements days and this is having an impact on children and families as well as the experience for the students.

ANSWER- SWE will raise internally. On Education page of SWE, HEIs talk about changes they’ve made to meet the standards. Suggest link to education quality assurance officer (EQA) The London Education Quality Assurance Officer is [Rebecca.Mulvaney@socialworkengland.org.uk](mailto:Rebecca.Mulvaney@socialworkengland.org.uk) and the SE EQA is Josh

1. Over the next registration period how much CPD needs to be recorded....thanks

ANSWER we have not made any firm decision on what the CPD request/expectation will be in year 2. For now, it remains the same but obviously if this changes we will share with the sector.

1. I know the pandemic has delayed some fitness to practice hearings - how much of a backlog is there now, and what plan is in place to move forward with this (in these difficult times)?

ANSWER- FTP had extra resource. Have had to prioritise most serious meetings. Hope will ease. Hearings mainly virtual but not all.

Please email Julie and Kate with any other queries You can contact at kate.metcalf@socialworkengland.org.uk and [julie.campbell@socialworkengland.org.uk](mailto:julie.campbell@socialworkengland.org.uk)

Further comments in the chat included:

* The Open university has a principle document that things should go ahead as planned. If there are particular issues for an individual student there will be flexibility however, they have to meet other criteria eg records of practice, direct obs, SU feedback and be on target to pass
* I think the FTP workshops will be very useful and some employers are not clear at what point to raise a concern and if they can seek advice before raising a formal concern
* I also mentioned in our breakout session about the ASYE paperwork making reference to the SWE professional standards, as they are not referenced, and NQSW’s who are submitting their reviews for their CPD, need to evidence how they meet the standards
* A question was asked about whether social workers had been prioritised for the Covid vaccine and those responding all said yes

1. **Future meetings**

The view was that the next meeting would need to be virtual. This will be held in May and a date will be confirmed in the social work briefing.