

20th March 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: ICTG Service response to the Covid-19 National Threat

Our country is in unprecedented territory and a national crisis. The ICTG Service, in conjunction with the Home Office, has been planning for the unfolding situation with the aim to:

- Continue taking referrals of children and young people who have been identified as potentially trafficked.
- Maintain the work with children and young people who have been referred.
- Maintain the work that the Regional Practice Co-ordinators are doing with professionals.
- Maintain the momentum of awareness raising across the ICTG service.

We are all working within a fast moving and unpredictable time. With this in mind, the ICTG Service has worked quickly to ensure that:

- A screening questionnaire is completed at referral to assess any possible exposure to the coronavirus to help with a risk assessed ICTG Service plan to start work with the child.
- Children/carers have been communicated with to investigate ways to maintain remote contact over a potential lockdown/self-isolation period.
- Ensure training in various remote working applications to enable ICTGs to work with children at distance.
- Preparing ICTG Service welcome packs that can be sent out to help orientate children to the service as well as build relationship from distance.
- There are comprehensive personal plan for all ICTG Service staff that enables the service to continue in the eventuality of national lockdown and/or illness.

We wanted to write to outline how the ICTG Service will work with children and young people in direct work and in the Regional Practice Coordinator role in the coming months:

1. New Referrals to the ICTG Service

- We will continue to take new referrals business as usual through our secure email trafficking.referrals@bypmk.cjsm or phoning 0800 043 4303.
- We will continue to provide 24/7 support to any new referral or any needs for discussions around a potentially trafficked child.

- Safety advice and guidance will be given out at referral tailored to the child.
- The child will then be referred to a manager to allocate to an ICTG/RPC.

2. New Children into ICTG Service

- Once allocated to a Direct Work ICTG, the ICTG will send out a welcome pack to the child's address.
- The carer/accommodation provider will be contacted to discuss the best way to make remote contact with the child.
- A film leaflet will be shared with a child that is translated into their own language.
- The ICTG will engage interpreters who are willing to work remotely
- A video link up will be set up as soon as possible.
- ICTG Sessions will be carried out as normal – the ICTG team are committed to find innovative ways to work and build relationship without face to face contact.
- The ICTG will work closely with their manager to trouble shoot any unusual circumstances or hard to reach children.

3. Current children already in the ICTG Service

- All children/carers will have been contacted to make a plan for remote working.
- There will be one or more video sessions per week for vulnerable children with the added opportunity to do short pieces of work throughout the week should the need arise.
- The service will also be sending out information and follow up work with children and young people via text, emails and calls.
- Work outside of these meetings will continue including updates with social workers and other professionals, support to foster carers if needed, looking at the support network (including online if safe to do so) around the child etc.

4. Regional Practice Co-ordinator Work/Awareness Raising

- The RPC will continue to work with professionals to support children and young people via telephone, email, and video/voice conferencing.
- They will be available to call into appropriate meetings and provide expertise and guidance around trafficking.

All the above measures are already in place and we are ready to commence these from the 22nd March 2020. The Home Office are supportive of the measures that we are taking.

As the situation across the country unfolds, the following remaining measures will be commenced.

1. Regular webinars to cover topics that professionals need help on e.g. NRM, Section 45, Identification of trafficked children, trauma informed practice etc. We will be release the timetable for this in due course.
2. Increasing the amount of briefings that we put out on the basis of the trends and themes that we are seeing across the service.

Any further measures that we take to build on the ICTG Service to keep it running smoothly during this time will be communicated with you in due course.

We hope that this letter sets out what you can expect from the ICTG Service at this difficult time. Our priority is to remain effective and responsive to children and young people who have been trafficked into, out of and around the UK, as well as the professionals that we work with. We will work tirelessly to make sure that Covid-19 does not stop this work.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your Regional Manager (contact details below) or myself as the Programme Director.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Griffiths



Programme Director

Contact Details

Rebecca Griffiths – ICTG Programme Director

rebecca.griffiths@barnardos.org.uk

Emma Hawley – Regional Manager Greater Manchester and Support Line

emma.hawley@barnardos.org.uk

Allyson Davis – Regional Manager Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and Wales

Allyson.davis@barnardos.org.uk

Rachel Hopper – Regional Manager West Midlands

Rachel.hopper@barnardos.org.uk

Kelly Hounslow - Regional Manager East Midlands

Kelly.hounslow@barnardos.org.uk

Bina Godhania – Regional Manager London Borough of Croydon

Bina.godhania@barnardos.org.uk