National Training for Panel Practice Advisors

CHS Training Unit Prospectus 2016
Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) is a public body responsible for the recruitment, selection, training, retention and support of Children’s Panel and Area Support Team members.

The national Children’s Panel is the largest tribunal in Scotland, comprising around 2,500 panel members. Panel members are volunteers from local communities across Scotland who are recruited and trained to make decisions to help improve the lives of vulnerable children and young people attending children’s hearings. Area Support Teams (ASTs) are made up of local volunteers, who carry out functions on behalf of the National Convener of Children’s Hearings Scotland to support members of the Children’s Panel who sit on children’s hearings in their area.

This prospectus was prepared by the Children’s Hearings Scotland Training Unit and the Children’s Hearings Scotland National Team.
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Foreword from the National Convener and CEO

Welcome to the CHS Panel Practice Advisor Training Prospectus for 2016. Inside you will find course outlines and schedules for the range of training available to Panel Practice Advisors this year.

The role you play as a Panel Practice Advisor (PPA) is key in ensuring that best practice operates consistently throughout Scotland. Children’s hearings have to reach good quality decisions, based on the views of children and young people and on the evidence and recommendations presented by professionals. The observation of and feedback to panel members and the identification of training needs which you as PPAs provide is a core element of this.

Only by continually reviewing, improving and updating our knowledge and skills can we be sure that we are continuing to deliver the best decisions for children and young people. Insightful, well trained and skilful Panel Practice Advisors play the central role in fostering this culture of continuous improvement and help for panel members.

The CHS National Team works closely with the CHS Training Unit at West Lothian College to provide a programme of high quality training. The initial focus has been on new panel members. Increasingly we are looking now to develop the necessary training to enhance the skills and knowledge of AST members who support the operation of the Children’s Hearings System and the maintenance of standards. Our recent leadership event for Area Conveners (ACs) and Depute Area Conveners is part of this development.

We are also participating the in AC Liaison Group workstream which is looking longer term at reinforcing the role and function of PPAs as well as making recommendations later this year on the training requirements for new and existing PPAs. These recommendations will need to be considered and an action plan agreed for any future training. Meantime this prospectus sets out what is on offer for 2016 for both new and existing PPAs.

This prospectus is a new development for CHS and the Training Unit. We will look to learn from the implementation of the new approach and refine in the light of experience.

We hope this will assist you in thinking about your training needs and where and when you might take up the training.

Best wishes

Boyd McAdam
National Convener and CEO
Vision

Our vision is of a Children’s Hearings System where everyone works together, making sure that all children and young people are cared for and protected, and their views are heard, respected and valued.

Mission

Our mission is to improve outcomes and experiences for children and young people in Scotland who may be at risk. We will do this by supporting the Children’s Panel, working with partners and using our influence to drive improvements across the Children’s Hearings System.

Values

Child centred
Making sure everything we do is in the best interests of children and young people

Respectful
Treating children, young people, their families, partners and each other with care and consideration

Fair
Making sure that everyone is treated with dignity and according to their individual needs; that our information and services are accessible to all; that we provide a consistent level of service to all

Creative
Considering innovative and imaginative ways of approaching the issues we face in the work we do

Challenging
Not being complacent, but questioning ourselves and others to help us improve

Open
Listening, responding to and learning from feedback; acting honestly; ensuring processes are transparent; sharing information and being accountable for our actions and decisions
National Standards for the Children’s Panel

The national standards provide a set of core values, principles and expectations in relation to the behaviours and practice of everyone directly involved with the Children’s Panel, whenever they are dealing with others.

**Standard 1** - Children and young people are at the centre of everything we do

**Standard 2** - Panel members are well equipped and supported to undertake their role

**Standard 3** - Panel member practice is consistent across the whole of Scotland

**Standard 4** - Every children’s hearing is managed fairly and effectively within the System

**Standard 5** - Every children’s hearing makes decisions based on sound reasons in the best interests of the child or young person

**Standard 6** - Area Support Team members are well equipped and supported to undertake their role

**Standard 7** - Communication and information sharing across the Children’s Panel, ASTs and CHS is clear, appropriate and purposeful

**Standard 8** - Functions, roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood within the System
The Children’s Hearings Scotland Training Unit operates from West Lothian College based in Livingston. It is tasked with developing, delivering and monitoring national approved training to new and existing panel members as well as supporting training for Area Support Team members.

National Approaches to Learning and Development

The CHS Training Unit, working closely with the CHS National Team, Area Support Teams and the wider CHS community, aims to engage with panel members to ensure they are equipped to uphold the values and national standards of the Children’s Hearings System.

Nationally the CHS Training Unit strives to deliver this aim through:

- Developing reflective panel practitioners, encouraging panel members to reflect on hearings and to consider what went well and what could have been improved upon.
- An adult learning approach to learning and development where, after reflection, panel members can identify their own current training needs and seek out opportunities to meet these needs.
- Offering panel members opportunities to share and learn from best practice, primarily from within the CHS Community but also from other professions and tribunals.
- The use of evidence based knowledge and skills development including the use of primary research and academic publications.
- The increasing use of technology to enhance knowledge and understanding, allowing face to face training sessions to concentrate on discussion, sharing good practice and skills development.
- The deployment at training sessions of experienced and trained group leaders who are serving panel members, and help to facilitate small group discussion and skills development.

All programmes are repeated in several locations and are not AST area specific, giving participants a choice of date and location. However it is anticipated that most attendees will choose courses that are most convenient to their location.

Structure and Staffing

The regional training managers, the training staff and the national manager are all experienced trainers, with many being experienced former panel members. Although training staff cannot longer serve as current panel members they engage in an annual programme of hearings observations and policy updates as well as continuous professional development around learning and teaching to ensure their skills and knowledge are kept up to date. The training staff are supported by regional administrators and e-learning development staff. A list of staff and contact details can be found on the Learning and Development section of CHIRP.
Area Support Team Training

The National Convener and Children’s Hearings Scotland recognise the importance of ensuring that all panel members receive consistent support, management, and learning and development opportunities. The training programme set out below is designed to meet the needs of recently recruited PPAs, and those who will be recruited in 2016, in fulfilling their key roles. It can also be used as a whole, or in part, to refresh the practice of existing AST members.

N.B. The role of PPAs, their recruitment and subsequent training, is currently under review. It is anticipated that the outcome of this process will impact on recruitment and training in 2017.

Prerequisites for training

Participants should be appointed PPAs or other relevant AST members. For some courses such as Recruitment and Selection, serving panel members may attend if they have been identified as having to assist with that function.

For new AST members it is recommended that they undertake at least one hearing observation prior to attending their first training course.

Enrolment

AST members, including new and existing PPAs who are interested in attending any of the training opportunities, should discuss their requirement with their local Area Convener or Deputy Area Convener.

Once participation is confirmed by the local AST, invitations to enrol on the programme will be issued by the Children’s Hearings Scotland Training Unit. Joining instructions including pre-reading and preparation activities will be issued prior to the course.

Training modules

Training is available for:
- Recruitment and Selection of panel members
- Observation and Feedback
- Reappointment of panel members
- Complaints Handling

A pre-cursor to these modules is a session introducing new AST members to the Children’s Hearing System, its origins, underpinning principles, core values and the key stages of a Children’s Hearing.

Each module will involve:
- advanced reading and preparation
- presentations of the key learning points
- discussion and participation in small group activity
- further reading and reflection for participants
Module 1 - Introduction to the Children’s Hearings System

The purpose of this introductory day’s training is to introduce new PPAs and other AST members to the Children’s Hearing System and provide them with a foundation on which to develop the skills necessary for their role.

Who is the module for?

This module is for any new or recently appointed PPAs or other members of the AST who have not previously been panel members or have limited experience of the Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011.

How long is the module?

This module typically consists of one day of face to face training, plus pre-course reading and post-course reflection on how to apply the skills and knowledge developed. It is also recommended that participants observe a hearings session before attending.

What is covered in the module?

Using a combination of trainer-led discussion, group work and observing a simulated hearing, this module aims to give participants:

- an understanding of the Kilbrandon principles and the values that underpin the Children’s Hearings System
- an introduction to what happens at a hearing
- an understanding of the legal and best practice requirements at each of the four main stages of a hearing

When and where is the module offered?

Saturday 4 June - Dunfermline
Tuesday 7 June - Glasgow
Friday 10 June - Aberdeen
Saturday 13 August - Dundee
Friday 19 August - Edinburgh
Module 2 - Observations and Feedback

One of the key responsibilities of PPAs is to observe panel members at hearings, assess panel member practice and to give constructive feedback both verbally and written.

Who is the module for?

This module is for any new Panel Practice Advisor. This module can also be used as a refresher for existing Panel Practice Advisors.

How long is the module?

This module typically consists of one day face to face training, plus pre-course reading and post-course reflection on how to apply the skills and knowledge developed. It is also recommended that participants have completed ‘Module 1 - Introduction to the Children’s Hearings System’ or have been involved previously in the Children’s Hearings System.

What is covered in the module?

Using a combination of trainer led discussion, group work, case studies and opportunities to develop observation and feedback skills, the course aims to give participants:

- an understanding of the purpose and process of observations
- the skills required to measure practice against panel member national standards
- an understanding of what and how information gained should be recorded
- an understanding of the purpose and process of feedback
- the skills required to give effective feedback to panel members

When and where is the module offered?

Wednesday 15 June - Dunfermline
Friday 24 June - Aberdeen
Saturday 25 June - Glasgow
Saturday 10 September - Dundee
Tuesday 13 September - Glasgow
Friday 16 September - Edinburgh
Module 3 - Recruitment and Selection

One of the key responsibilities of Area Support Teams is to undertake the local recruitment of panel members as part of national recruitment campaigns and PPA have an important role in this.

Who is the module for?

This module is for any new member of the AST who is likely to be involved in the recruitment and selection process or any serving panel member delegated by the Area Convener to assist with the process. This module can also be used as a refresher for existing AST members.

How long is the module?

This module typically consists of one day face to face training plus pre-course reading and post-course reflection on how to apply the skills and knowledge developed. It is also recommended that participants have completed ‘Module 1 - Introduction to the Children’s Hearings System’ or have been involved previously in the Children’s Hearings System.

What is covered in the module?

Using a combination of trainer led discussion, group work, case studies and opportunities to develop interview skills, the course aims to give participants:

- an opportunity to develop knowledge and skills required in the selection of members of a children’s panel
- the skills required to assess applicants
- an understanding of the selection process
- interview techniques for selecting potential panel members
- an understanding of the standards expected of potential panel members
- an understanding of the importance of diversity when assessing candidates

When and where is the module offered?

Saturday 25 June - Dunfermline
Tuesday 16 August - Glasgow
Friday 19 August - Aberdeen
Saturday 27 August - Dundee
Tuesday 30 August - Glasgow
Saturday 3 September - Edinburgh
Module 4 - Reappointment

One of the key responsibilities of Area Support Teams is to make recommendations to the National Convener regarding panel member reappointment, and PPAs have a significant role in this process.

Who is the module for?

This module is for any new PPA or other member of the AST who is likely to be involved in the reappointment process. This module can also be used as a refresher for existing AST members.

How long is the module?

This module typically consists of half a day face to face training plus pre-course reading and post-course reflection on how to apply the skills and knowledge developed. It is also recommended that participants have completed 'Module 1 - Introduction to the Children’s Hearings System' or have been involved previously in the Children’s Hearings System.

What is covered in the module?

Using a combination of trainer led discussion, group work, case studies and opportunities to develop interview skills, the course aims to give participants:

- an understanding of what should be included in the reappointment meeting
- an understanding of what information is needed to facilitate the reappointment process
- the skills required to conduct reappointment meetings
- an understanding of how to make the recommendations for reappointment

When and where is the module offered?

Thursday 20 October - Glasgow
Saturday 29 October - Dundee
Thursday 24 November - Edinburgh
Saturday 26 November - Aberdeen
Module 5 - Complaints Handling

Handling of complaints and concerns is a key part of the role of the Area Support Team.

Who is the module for?

This module is for any new member of the AST who is likely to be involved in the complaints handling. This module can also be used as a refresher for existing AST members.

How long is the module?

This module typically consists of one day face to face training. It is also recommended that participants have completed ‘Module 1 - Introduction to the Children’s Hearings System’ or have been involved previously in the Children’s Hearings System.

What is covered in the module?

Using a combination of trainer led discussion, group work and case studies, the module will cover:

- an overview of the changes to the Complaints Handling Procedure
- what is a complaint
- who can make a complaint
- why people complain and what they want to achieve by complaining
- ways to avoid complaints escalating further
- the value of empathy and appropriate apology
- ways of managing difficult behaviour and using an unacceptable actions policy if necessary
- complaint investigation skills

When and where is the module offered?

Tuesday 12 April – Inverness
Wednesday 13 April – Aberdeen
Monday 18 April – Edinburgh
Tuesday 19 April – Edinburgh
Thursday 28 April – Glasgow
Friday 29 April – Glasgow
Wednesday 11 May – Glasgow
Thursday 12 May – Perth/Dundee
Expenses and accommodation for attendance at training

CHS is committed to ensuring that panel members and AST members are not left out-of-pocket as a result of their volunteering, and to reimbursing all reasonable expenses in an accessible, fair and timely manner.

Out-of-pocket expenses for volunteers are defined in best practice for the voluntary sector as including:

- travel expenses to and from where they are volunteering
- other subsistence costs – e.g. food and drink
- training
- childcare

Claiming expenses

Claims are submitted by completing the expenses claim form which can be requested from the Clerk to your AST or downloaded from CHIRP. Some key things to bear in mind when claiming expenses are:

- Legitimate expenses are incurred when a panel or AST member is attending national training linked to the national curriculum or other local training linked to the national curriculum which has been approved by the National Convener
- The provision and booking of overnight accommodation in relation to training is undertaken by the CHS Training Unit (see box to the right)
- Ferry and flight costs must be approved by the CHS National Team, or a person with delegated authority from the CHS National Team, prior to booking. Costs may be paid in full upon production of a ticket for the lowest available rate.
- Panel members and AST members will not be reimbursed for any expenses for meals and refreshments when these have been provided free of charge by CHS or any other body (e.g. lunch at training events).

This is not an exhaustive list of considerations when claiming expenses, and we recommend that when submitting expenses you should refer to the Panel Member and AST Member Expenses Policy which is available on CHIRP. The policy sets out which expenses can be claimed, as well as the current rates of payment.

We ask that panel members submit any expenses claims as soon as possible, and at most within three months of when the expense was incurred.

Accommodation for training

When attending training it will sometimes be necessary to require overnight accommodation. Overnight accommodation will be offered to anyone travelling for longer than 1.5 hours to a training course.

Overnight accommodation for national training is arranged and provided by the CHS Training Unit. Requests for overnight accommodation should be made to your local Training Unit team in advance of any attendance at training, ideally at the same time as you book your course.

Volunteers should not book their own accommodation for training unless explicit approval is sought from the CHS Training Unit prior to booking. Accommodation booked in this way is unlikely to be reimbursed through expenses.