



Quality Assurance Funding Request

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1. Background

- a. The SESLIP Quality Assurance (QA) network attempted over the years to engage collaborative activity but was unsuccessful in developing a strong number of peer-to-peer QA activities. SESLIP activity was unable to consistently develop and implement across all LAs to produce learning and suggested ways forward. Enquiries identified there are incongruent systems across SESLIP LAs making it too difficult to identify how one another's data and qualitative information may align. There is not the resource to undertake data and qualitative analysis of the collated SESLIP LAs' information nor to produce a final report with recommendations which may shape guidance.
- b. Kent County Council hosts a Kent Analytics Service specialising in reviewing data, scoping and developing enquiries to research and understand the problem more holistically. There is a robust ethics approval process for any research. Research goes on to either reshape data or stop collating data on identified points or create new data points for review over the future. The Analytics Service supported KCC in developing strong surveys, QA activity and analysis which shaped local policy and practice tools contributing to KCC's Ofsted inspection outcome.
- c. SESLIP Local Authorities (LA) experienced 5 ILACS inspections in the past year (2023-24) where management oversight was consistently identified as an area of challenge. The network agreed with these findings noting ILAC inspections from the previous year (2022-23) are familiar, with current QA activity within the network similarly identifying the challenge within their LAs. The network observes Ofsted's observations are not significant limiting factors, but addressing the challenge would likely promote an opportunity to acquire a stronger judgement grading. The network observes there is comprehensive local policy and guidance with respect to supervision and management meetings but struggles to understand why management oversight does not appear to be improving accordingly.

2. Proposal

- a. The network proposes commissioning the Kent Analytic Service to complete the research and publish a report with respect to understanding the blockers in developing consistent management oversight across SESLIP LAs. The research will be used by the network to co-produce supervision templates.

3. Cost

- a. Kent Analytics costed £21,825 to complete the analysis and publish the report. This is a reduced cost given there is another business case with respect to Recruitment and Retention of Global Majority Social Workers with similar Kent Analytics activity proposed.



The reduced cost is in relation to overheads not being duplicated for an additional project.

- b. If the Board agrees to fund one project, the cost will be £29,500, with about £8k being an avoided duplication if both projects are endorsed.
- c. The combined cost of Kent Analytics contributing to both projects will be £43,650.

4. Hypothesis

- a. The network observes a likely challenge in managers and senior managers not recognising the difference between the 2 following points:
 - 1. Reflections on what is happening for the family and the reflections on the family's capacity to change. Reflections on the family's prognosis for the future if there is limited change.
 - 2. Reflections on the practitioner's personal and lived experiences in how they use these to inform their assessment and analysis of risk. Exploration of practitioner personal biases, whether conscious or unconscious, to support the practitioner in critical reflection in order to develop stronger objective skills in assessment and analysis. Thereby, supporting the development of autonomous critical reflection which may also be a pathway to management/ leadership.
- b. Part 1 of reflection should be recorded on the child's file, part 2 should not but recorded within personal supervision. Under an individual's Subject Access Request (SAR), the supervision records on a file may be share but the data protection of the practitioner must be given regard, leading to redactions. However, the practitioner's reflections on the family should be filed, the practitioner's personal reflections on how their lived experiences inform their assessment and analysis should be redacted.
- c. The network's hypothesis is managers in real time record the narrative of the family and do not hold the confidence to act on the difference between the two, hence, neither are recorded. QA activity when meeting with managers and practitioners identifies the discussions are taking place, but there is little recording on either the child's file nor the practitioner's personal supervision record.

5. Method

- a. Kent Analytics will:-
 - 1. Receive from all SESLIP LAs the data and QA activity in regards to management oversight, for example, rate of completion of supervision, Audit outcomes on management oversight and staff/Social Work surveys which may have explored management oversight.
 - 2. Kent Analytics will produce a suggested survey and research proposal including focus groups for QA related staff across the SESLIP LAs to participate.
 - 3. The QA network will be sighted on the initial data analysis and co-produce the survey with Kent Analytics.
 - 4. Kent Analytics will collate all survey and focused group responses to publish a final report with recommendations. The network will co-produce the recommendations. The research would likely take **6 months from start to publication**.
 - 5. The network would co-produce supervision templates each in respect of parts 1 and 2 identified earlier. This would likely take **3 months** to produce.

6. Depending on funding for 2025-26, Kent Analytics would complete similar activity and research to understand the impact of the templates around 6-9 months later. Kent Analytics would have suggested new data points or current which may be utilised as reference points to measure impact within the new research.

6. **Impact**

- a. The network envisages there will be a demonstrable impact on management oversight emerging through all Ofsted and HMIP inspection activity. This will include focused visits, JTAI and ILACS as well as HMIP inspection of Youth Justice Services. Local QA activity and data regarding management oversight may identify improvements which may also support improvements across other key performance indicators. Such examples may include reduced caseloads, shorter periods of CIN/CP plans, reduced re-referrals, etc. These improvements would likely emerge within 2025-26, where Kent Analytics may capture the learning.
- b. SESLIP may present published report(s) and suggested tools/practice guidance to ADCS and perhaps contribute towards national development of improving management oversight. Perhaps the initial work will be sufficient to pave the way.

