

SUMMARY: FILE REVIEW
Of the Critical Injury of a Child in the Care of the Director

Circumstances of the Critical Injury

The review examined the case files for an Indigenous child who was critically injured at their care provider's home. The Director was providing services to the child and their family at the time of the critical injury in relation to concerns of abuse and neglect.

Findings

Due to safety concerns in the parents' home, the parents agreed that the child be placed in the care of a family friend through an out-of-care option arrangement; however, the necessary steps to assess the appropriateness of the care provider were not fully completed.

The child resided with this care provider for one year, before returning to the care of the mother under a court order. The father was considered unready to resume safe care. After the child's return to the mother's care, the Director received multiple reports regarding the mother's inability to care for the child, and within three weeks the child was brought into the Director's care and placed with the former care provider.

The required screening and assessment process prior to placing the child with the care provider the second time, was not completed. A significant period of time passed since the initial incomplete assessment of the care provider, and the circumstances for the child had also changed. A fully completed assessment that included the updated information about the child would have informed the Director's decision whether to place the child with the care provider again. Three weeks after the placement, the child was admitted to hospital due to an injury sustained while in the care provider's home.

Actions

The Ministry's Quality Assurance Team facilitated a discussion with the involved SDA leadership, resulting in an action plan to send a letter to the involved teams outlining the procedures (as well as the tools and templates) required to complete assessments for out-of-care providers, and highlight the importance of completing them in a timely manner.

The review was completed in February 2019. The above action plan was due for full implementation in April 2019.