



REPORT ON THE NEAR FATALITY OF:

[REDACTED]

Date of Birth: 08/15/2003
Date of Incident: 04/01/2017-07/05/2017
Date of Report to ChildLine: 07/07/2017
CWIS Referral ID: [REDACTED]

FAMILY KNOWN TO COUNTY CHILD WELFARE:

Chester County Children and Youth Services

REPORT FINALIZED ON:
01/13/2018

Unredacted reports are confidential under the provisions of the Child Protective Services Law and cannot be released to the public.
(23 Pa. C.S. Section 6340)

Unauthorized release is prohibited under penalty of law.
(23 Pa. C.S. Section 6349 (b))

Reason for Review:

Pursuant to the Child Protective Services Law, the Department, through OCYF, must conduct a review and provide a written report of all cases of suspected child abuse that result in a fatality or near fatality. This written report must be completed as soon as possible but no later than six months after the date the report was registered with ChildLine for investigation.

The Child Protective Services Law also requires that county children and youth agencies convene a review when a report of child abuse involving a fatality or near fatality is substantiated or when a status determination has not been made regarding the report within 30 days of the report to ChildLine.

Chester County has convened a review team in accordance with the Child Protective Services Law related to this report. The county review team was convened on 8/02/2017.

Family Constellation:

<u>First and Last Name:</u>	<u>Relationship:</u>	<u>Date of Birth:</u>
[REDACTED]	victim child	08/15/2003
[REDACTED]	mother	[REDACTED] 1973
[REDACTED]	father	[REDACTED] 1970
[REDACTED]	sibling	[REDACTED] 1999
[REDACTED]	sibling	[REDACTED] 2000
[REDACTED]	sibling	[REDACTED] 2004

Summary of OCYF Child Near-Fatality Review Activities:

The Southeast Regional Office of Children, Youth and Families reviewed the case file, including medical records, case notes, and other documentation, and spoke to ongoing and intake county staff on 10/31/2017.

Summary of Circumstances prior to Incident:

On 12/16/2016, a Child Protective Services Report (CPS) was received by Chester County Children Youth and Family Services (CCCYFS), stating that the victim child is in the hospital, and that he had been in many other hospitals. The mother was limiting the victim child’s involvement with doctors [REDACTED] the child appeared to be healthy. The parents were insisting on more testing, and did not seem to want him to get up and move around. Child did not attend school the previous year. [REDACTED] the parents were convinced that the victim child had a disease that the doctors were missing. [REDACTED] This report was determined to be unfounded on 01/13/2017, as the basic needs were being met, and the parents were able to provide medical documentation of a medical condition.

On 02/19/2017, a CPS report was received by CCYFS, stating that the victim child appeared to be in poor health, with signs of abuse or neglect. The victim child seemed socially withdrawn and had signs of malnutrition. The child was wearing noise-cancelling headphones. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Both parents were present for the transport to the hospital. The patient's father was crying about the events on arrival at Lancaster General Hospital, and he took photographs or video of the victim child being taken out of the ambulance. This report was determined to be unfounded on 03/31/2017, as the investigation revealed that the parents were seeking medical care as they felt was appropriate, and they took the child to the hospital when he was refusing to eat. The family was not offered child welfare services at that time.

On 06/27/2017, a General Protective Services (GPS) report was received by CCCYFS, stating that the child is given IV fluids several times per week. The child [REDACTED] about a year ago as per the parents, but there was no record of this. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Child would stare in one direction, without verbalization. Child was a normally-functioning child a year prior. Child was essentially wasting away. He had multiple bruises on his shoulder and upper arms. The parents reported that he would bite himself when being fed [REDACTED]. Child could no longer walk, talk, or toilet himself independently. Parents explained that the child had to stay in a dark room due to his sensitivity to light. Child's primary care doctor had only been seeing him for a few weeks. This report was determined to be valid on 07/26/2017, as the child had lost 11 pounds since [REDACTED] a few months prior.

Circumstances of Child Near-Fatality and Related Case Activity:

On 07/07/2017, a CPS report of serious physical neglect was received by CCCYFS, stating that the victim child had not been provided with adequate nutrition or hydration. It was stated that the 13-year-old child had lost 11 pounds since a previous hospitalization in March 2017, and that the parents were obstructing the hospital's efforts to provide medical care, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This report was certified as a near fatality report.

On 07/11/2017, the CHOP [REDACTED] contacted the Chester County worker, stating that the hospital had communicated to the parents that they needed to leave the hospital, and only return for meetings. It was explained that the parents were obstructing the hospital's efforts to care for the child. At one point, the parents spoke with and prayed with the child, which seemed to result in an immediate turn-around in the child's condition.

On 07/12/2017, Chester County staff attended a hospital team meeting. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

On 07/20/2017, the Chester County CYF supervisor met with the parents [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The parents both stated that they believed that medical staff were ignoring the victim child's medical problem [REDACTED]

On 08/29/2017, the report was determined to be Indicated for both parents, as the parents did not implement recommendations made [REDACTED] and their failure to provide the child with proper nutrition, causing him to lose a significant amount of weight in a short period of time.

On 10/06/2017, the victim child [REDACTED] He was eating on his own, [REDACTED] and he had gained weight. He [REDACTED] to his aunt, a nurse, who was awarded temporary legal custody of the child.

The victim child was living with his aunt and uncle, and they have been up on all medical appointments as recommended. The child weight increased to 114 pounds, and is doing well. [REDACTED] The child was attending a [REDACTED] school [REDACTED] at the request of his parents.

The victim child's parents were provided visits with the child, supervised by the aunt and uncle. Contact progressed to the parents being permitted to transport the child to medical appointments, with a plan to move to all day visits as the permanency goal for the child is reunification.

The parents have been cooperative with the county's efforts to reunify the child, and with the restrictions on visitation. The county provided in-home services to the child in his aunt and uncle's home, and services to the parents. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Law enforcement has declined to file criminal charges in this case.

County Strengths, Deficiencies and Recommendations for Change as Identified by the County's Child Near-Fatality Report:

- Strengths in compliance with statutes, regulations and services to children and families;
 - CYF has been compliant with statutes, regulations and provision of services to children and families.
- Deficiencies in compliance with statutes, regulations and services to children and families; None identified
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on reducing the likelihood of future child fatalities and near fatalities directly related to abuse;
 - CYF and hospitals should ensure ongoing consultation and communication during the assessment of cases referred to CYF by the hospital.
 - Hospitals are encouraged to ensure that plainly written discharge summaries and expectations are reviewed with parents in a manner and language in which the parents can easily understand.
 - Whenever CYF is involved during a child's admission to a hospital, a copy of [REDACTED] and any other documents outlining the follow up expectations should be provided to CYF to be included during the family assessment and to ensure appropriate service delivery.
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on monitoring and inspection of county agencies; None identified
- Recommendations for changes at the state and local levels on collaboration of community agencies and service providers to prevent child abuse: None identified

Department Review of County Internal Report:

The Department received and reviewed the county report and concurs with the report contents, findings and recommendations.

Department of Human Services Findings:

- County Strengths: The county investigation was thorough and strengths-based.
- County Weaknesses: and
- Statutory and Regulatory Areas of Non-Compliance by the County Agency.

None identified

Department of Human Services Recommendations:

It is imperative that parents fully understand the instructions provided at the time of a child's hospital discharge. It is recommended that guidance be provided through the Department of Health regarding alternate manners in providing medical instructions to lay persons.