

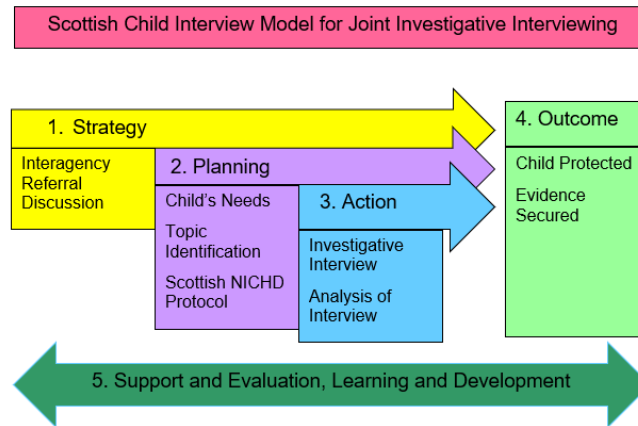
National Joint Investigative Interviewer Practice Evaluation Framework, Guidance and Toolkit (V3.1)

Revised November 2024

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1. Overview



The Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) is the new approach to joint investigative interviewing, being introduced across Scotland since 2020. The new approach is a five-component model of practice which is trauma informed, designed to minimise re-traumatisation and keep the needs and rights of the child at the centre of their interview experience, and is also designed to achieve best evidence through improved planning and interviewing techniques.

The five components are strategy, planning, action, outcomes and ongoing support and evaluation, learning and development. These five components are inter-linked, and all must be implemented for the model to have the intended benefits.

The fifth component of the model is support and evaluation, learning and development.

Given the complex nature of the interviewer role and to minimise the risk of vicarious trauma, interviewers must be afforded significant support. It is essential that formal support mechanisms are established alongside more informal supports.

Consistent and robust practice evaluation processes ensure that interviewers continue to learn and develop their skills, contributing to ongoing learning and development of joint investigative interviewing practice.

Effective support and evaluation processes are key to the success of all components of the model.

Several strategies will help support interviewers in practice. These strategies include effective workload management, clear managerial oversight and support and recognition of the role that interviewers have in the protection of children and young people.

A critical strategy to support interviewers in practice is a structured evaluation framework. The Scottish Child Interview Model includes an Interviewer Practice Evaluation Framework, and this document outlines this framework and associated guidance,

This document should be read in conjunction with the publication 'Scottish Child Interview Model for Joint Investigative Interviewing Evidence Based Interviewer Practice – Research Series 1. Evaluation of Interview Practice', attached at appendix 3. This distils the key messages from research about the role of structured evaluation of practice, which underpins this Practice Evaluation Framework.

The following requirements in relation to evaluation of practice must be realised and quality assured from date of interviewer deployment in practice. The combined approach will ensure a robust programme of evaluation for interviewers operating under the Scottish Child Interview Model in Scotland. Frequent practice opportunities and regular practice-focussed feedback are essential to ensure continued improvements to experiences for children and interview quality.

In addition, research suggests that interviewers may need some time to consolidate learning following completion of their training and consistently integrate this into their practice.

We are keen to support the development of interviewers' practice through evaluations, but we would also encourage interviewers to take responsibility for their own learning and development, whilst contributing the learning of their peers.

To effectively review their own practice, interviewers must be afforded time to develop the skills to identify prompts and question types and have the capacity to transcribe their interviews, allowing them to review their own interviews and review the work of their peers. Engaging in a process of continuous adaptation and learning, developing skills in reflective practice are also essential for the role.

2. National Joint Investigative Interviewer Practice Evaluation Framework

The recommended framework of evaluation has several features, including formal and informal evaluations, with the aim of supporting the development of a culture of reflective practice, learning and development. In addition to formal, recorded evaluation procedures there is an expectation that following every interview, alongside the analysis of evidence and information from the interview, interviewers will take the time to reflect informally with their colleague upon their interview practice. Areas for discussion would be expected to include:

- Application of the Scottish NICHD Principles
- The role of the second interviewer
- Interviewers' overall experience of the interview and working as a team
- Quality of recording

2a. Formal Evaluation

Formal evaluation refers to a self, peer, manager or external (national team) evaluation that is recorded and associated paperwork completed and logged. All types of formal evaluation must take place with regularity and at recommended intervals to ensure interviewing skills are both maintained and developed.

All categories of formal evaluation include the following components -

1. A transcript should be available for use during the evaluation. This does not need to be a checked transcript. The evaluation process offers an opportunity to complete the required scrutiny of the transcript.
2. A copy of the briefing document and/or associated IRD paperwork is required to understand context and purpose of the interview.
3. All interviewer planning documentation should be evaluated, and comment made. This refers to the Plan for the Child's Needs, Topic Identification Plan, and the Interview Plan.
4. Those evaluating must watch the recording and refer to the transcript of the interview.
5. Those evaluating will use the skills developed during either interviewer or managers and evaluators training to undertake evaluation, utilising the National Joint Investigative Interviewer Practice Evaluation Tool and Guidance and associated paperwork to record their reflections.
6. Records must be maintained of interviews evaluated and areas for development noted.

2b. Self-evaluation

1. The minimum frequency of self-evaluation is once every six months.
2. Planning documentation should be evaluated, and comment made.
3. Interviewers must watch the recording and refer to a transcript of the interview.
4. Interviewers should consider interview selection within a context of learning and development. Choosing an interview that felt additionally complex or didn't progress to the substantive phase is often appropriate.
5. Interviewers will use the skills developed during training to undertake self-evaluation, utilising the National Joint Investigative Interviewer Practice Evaluation Tool and Guidance and associated paperwork to record their reflections.
6. Records must be maintained of all interviews evaluated and areas for development noted and shared/discussed with manager to ensure opportunities for learning can be met either locally or through CPD/additional training.

2c. External Evaluation

External evaluation is conducted by members of the National Team. Evaluation by the National Team will be undertaken in the following circumstances -

1. The first evaluation of practice must be within first 3 months of going live following successful completion of module 3.
2. External evaluation will include review of all planning documents, including details from the interagency referral discussion relevant to the planning for the joint investigative interview, all of which should be made available to the national team.
3. The interview selected for evaluation should be one that has not previously been self-evaluated.
4. External evaluation will be undertaken by 2 evaluators – one Police one Social Work.
5. Managers trained as local evaluators will be offered the opportunity to shadow these evaluations.
6. Evaluators will watch the interview, refer to the transcript and agree the detail of evaluation feedback to be provided to interviewer.
7. Evaluators will undertake the evaluation using the National Joint Investigative Interviewer Practice Evaluation Tool and Guidance.
8. Evaluators will meet with the interviewer to review the evaluation feedback (and, if required, the interview too) and share conclusions reached in the evaluation as soon as possible following the evaluation.
9. The interviewer's own reflections during the feedback discussion will contribute to the overall evaluation write up and adequate preparation should be undertaken beforehand by the interviewer to familiarise themselves with the interview used.
10. Detailed feedback on the interviewer's practice and a written copy of the Evaluation feedback will be shared with the lead interviewer and their relevant manager(s) which may include briefing and debriefing manager and line manager if these are different individuals.
11. Should there be concerns regarding the interviewer's standards of practice, a development plan will be recommended by those evaluators undertaking the evaluation.
12. This could include, but is not limited to, further external evaluations by the National Team.
13. Dip sampling of interviewing practice will be conducted every two years.

2d. Peer Evaluation

1. The National Team will support local interview teams to establish peer evaluation sessions by modelling the format at least once per year. Requests for additional Supported Peer Evaluation sessions will be considered on an individual basis in response to need.
2. Every interviewer should aim to participate in a minimum of two peer evaluation annually.
3. The frequency of peer evaluation sessions will be dependent on the number of interviewers in the team and as an example for a team of eight would need to take place quarterly.
4. Peer evaluation sessions can be facilitated with any number of interviewers greater than one. Optimum numbers for peer sessions to maximise the shared learning would be around four or more members of an interview team.
5. Two interviews are to be reviewed during each full day session (one interview if a half-day session is planned) using interviews which interviewers have had transcribed. They do not need to have completed a self-evaluation in advance of the peer session and the interview chosen therefore must be one that is different from an interview selected for one of the two self-evaluations per year.
6. Individual interviewers should have an interview in which they were lead interviewer, peer evaluated at least once per year.
7. Peer evaluators will undertake the evaluation using the National Joint Investigative Interviewer Peer Evaluation Tool and Guidance.
8. Local managers will receive a copy of the completed National Joint Investigative Interview Evaluation paperwork to confirm that peer evaluations have taken place with strengths recognised and areas for development noted and actioned to ensure continuous shared learning practices.

2e. Local Evaluation by trained managers & evaluators

1. After the first evaluation of every interviewer in practice by the National Team within 3 months of going live, responsibility for undertaking and reporting on evaluation of interviewer practice will pass to local management.
2. Locally trained evaluators will carry out an evaluation of each interviewer's practice a minimum of once every six months. One interview must be an interview that has not previously been selected for self-evaluation, the other should be one that has been self-evaluated. This offers an opportunity to quality assure the interviewers ability to reflect adequately on own learning needs and practice.
3. Locally trained evaluators should undertake evaluations in pairs with a mix of disciplines – Social work/police.
4. Evaluators will undertake the evaluation using the National Joint Investigative Interviewer Practice Evaluation Tool and Guidance.
5. Managers must support a culture of reflection, learning, and development, allowing adequate time for all aspects of the Interviewer Practice Evaluation Model.
6. Interviewers should be encouraged by managers to reflect upon practice and note relevant learning as part of the debriefing that follows every interview.
7. A schedule for interviewer evaluation activity for each area where the Scottish Child Interview Model has been implemented should be drawn up with dates based on each individual interviewer's commencement in practice and completion of first evaluation of practice by the National Team.
8. Managers must liaise with the National Team as required, including timely submission of the Evaluation Spreadsheet, to ensure that records of all evaluation activity undertaken in their area – peer, self, local manager – are accurately maintained and are routinely available to review, to ensure compliance with quality assurance standards.

2f. National Dip Sampling Evaluations

1. Dip Sampling evaluations will now form part of the Interviewer Practice Evaluation Framework This will add value to current evaluation and auditing processes and provide greater assurance that interviewers continue to meet best practice standards.
2. The National Teams knowledge of interviewer practice experience will be utilised to select interviews for evaluation methodically. Interviews and interviewers chosen will be carefully planned in accordance with length of time since initial training and any subsequent refresher training or known learning and development needs.
3. Every interviewer operational across Scotland will be dip sampled on an ongoing every two years basis.
4. Dip sampling evaluations will offer information and feedback on performance of interviewers and build a national picture of continuing leaning and development need.
5. The National Team will apply stringent recording keeping and tracking processes when selecting interviews and interviewers.
6. Evaluators from the National Team will undertake the dip sample evaluation using the National Joint Investigative Interviewer Practice Evaluation Tool and Guidance.
7. Key messages about practice will be highlighted to inform practice, training, and workforce development.
8. The dip-sampling process is an important function to support practitioner and relevant partner confidence in the application of best practice forensic interviewing of children across Scotland using the Scottish Child Interview Model, allowing reflection on whether practice remains in line with national policy and guidance and if anything needs to change.
9. If national or local trends emerge options to gather groups of colleagues - stakeholders, champions, managers, and practitioners - to reflect on these findings and agree any next steps in response to them will be considered.

2g. Adherence to National Joint Investigative Interviewer Practice Evaluation Framework

1. Individuals who wish to remain in the role of Joint Investigative Interviewer within the Scottish Child Interview Model must be committed to the recommended frequency of practice evaluation.
2. Managers who wish interviewers to remain in the specialist role of Joint Investigative Interviewer within the Scottish Child Interview Model must support individuals appropriately to allow evaluation activity to be undertaken, ensuring the recommended frequency of practice evaluation is adhered to.
3. When circumstances arise which affect an individual or manager's ability to undertake evaluations of practice as frequently as is recommended due to mitigating circumstances a request for support to ensure evaluations are undertaken will be considered on an individual basis.
4. The National Team will consider each request, and support, where possible, opportunities to support local evaluations to ensure adherence to the recommended frequency of evaluation activity set out in this framework.
5. Managers will have the option to utilise the support and experience of the National Team to collaborate with to ensure the schedule of evaluation activity is maintained. In mitigating circumstances, the National Team will offer the option of pairing up with a local evaluator to ensure that evaluation takes place in line with the required frequency.
6. Mitigating circumstances may include but are not limited to a significant period of authorised absence, for example maternity/paternity leave, sickness, bereavement, or absence from the role due to temporary business critical redeployment, increasing team size and local unavailability of pairings social work/police trained as evaluators.
7. **Adherence to the Interviewer Practice Evaluation Framework is a requirement of the Scottish Child Interview Model. Where this cannot be evidenced for an interviewer, to minimise risk and impact on performance, local managers should not deploy any Joint Investigative Interviewers within the Scottish Child Interview Model without assurance of their standard of practice.**

2h. Additional Training Needs identified through Evaluation Process

Evaluation of practice offers a structured quality assurance process to highlight strengths and qualities but also learning and development needs. When concerns emerge in respect of divergence from recommended forensic interviewing practice, the priority must firstly be interviewer well-being.

In agreement with local managers, the following options can be considered and agreed to ensure that learning needs are met for individuals to maintain standards in interviewing practice in the Scottish Child Interview Model.

1. National Team will undertake an additional evaluation of interviewers practice as a lead interviewer. If improvements are noted, recommendations will be offered to the interviewer and manager in respect of how to support learning and development in the workplace. Interviewers must then be prioritised for next cycle of manager evaluation locally.
2. When concerns persist beyond an additional evaluation, with no evidence of improvement on any of the action points identified from the first evaluation, a 2-day remedial course will be offered. Content will include involvement in simulated interview practice as a lead interviewers and review of critical learning themes that emerge.
3. Absence from the role of joint investigative interviewer for a period of six months or more requires an adequate refresh of knowledge and skills. Attendance at suitable teaching input refresher (2 days minimum) and simulated interview practice (minimum of 2 as lead interviewer) will be required.
4. Where the total absence is less than 6 months but still of a significant duration, the National Team will work with local managers to identify the best option for refresher and assurance of competence for redeployment.
5. Discussion with the National Team may result in a bespoke offer of refresher content being arranged. Decisions will be based on the individual interviewers' previous practice, learning and development needs and length of time since initial or other refresher training undertaken.
6. Interviewers attending for refresher or remedial learning input do not need to re-sit the summative assessment however formative feedback to support improvements to practice will be provided.
7. Interviewers will be supported by the National Team to return to a standard deemed competent.
8. Recommendations will be offered to interviewers and local managers regarding further learning and development needs if identified.
9. National Team evaluation of practice will be undertaken in the immediate three months following extended refresher and can include a locally trained manager who has responsibility for evaluations.
10. Persistent concerns regarding deviation from competent interviewing practice will require further discussion with those who have line management responsibility for the individual concerned and could result in the recommendation that the specialism is withdrawn.

11. The National Team will provide comprehensive written feedback on all evaluations undertaken, evidencing clearly the rationale for any such recommendation should the circumstance arise.

2i. Ancillary Evaluation of the Role of the Second Interviewer

1. All formal evaluation of the lead interviewer offers an important opportunity to comment on aspects of the second interviewers' practice that are relevant to the conduct of the interview.
2. The interviewer Practice Evaluation Tool can be used to note the strengths and areas for development for the individual in the role of the second interviewer.
3. Appendix 1 - National Joint Investigative Interviewer Practice Evaluation Guidance, Part 2 – Second Interviewer – allows for capture of the learning and development needs of the second interviewer.
4. This is particularly relevant where potential improvements or adjustments to their approach to supporting the lead interviewer have been identified.
5. This could include, but is not limited to, aspects of visual and audio quality and monitoring of equipment position; additional questioning or interruptions; timely responses and strategies to support the lead interviewer in providing a trauma informed approach.
6. Where there is relevant feedback to be provided to the second interviewer, this will be arranged separately to the evaluation feedback for the lead interviewer.
7. In a circumstance where the feedback for the second interviewer includes a significant practice issue, this will be discussed with the relevant manager prior to arranging any direct feedback to the interviewer.

2j. Practice Evaluation Frequency by Type Distribution Table

	External Evaluation	Self- Evaluation	Local Manager Evaluation	Peer Evaluation
Minimum Recommended Frequency	Within 3 months of going live in practice	Post module 5 requirement in first instance	Once every 6 months	Once per year as lead interviewer submitting interview
	Additional as required when learning needs identified	Once every 6 months thereafter		Twice per year attendance at sessions
Other circumstances	Following refresher training	As required when learning needs identified by self or recommended by others in line with responsibility for assurances of practice	Additional as required when learning needs identified	Additional as required – e.g. teams may select complex cases/good practice examples etc to use to support team members learning
	2 yearly dip sampling			

3. Appendixes

3a. Appendix 1

National Joint Investigative Interviewer Practice Evaluation Guidance

Guidance on National Team External evaluation grid for Joint Investigative Interview Evaluations

Scottish Child Interview Model

The consistent message from research is that without opportunities for evaluations and feedback, interviewers find it difficult to keep to best practice. To effectively review their practice interviewers must develop the skills to identify prompts and question types and have the capacity to transcribe their interviews, allowing them to self-review their own interviews and review the work of their peers.

For effective evaluation the following are required:

- Protected time to complete the evaluation
- Access to the interview recording
- Copies of relevant planning documents for review
- Copy of interview transcript
- Working knowledge of the Interview Practice Evaluation Framework and Guidance

Part 1 – Lead Interviewer

The Joint Investigative Interview – EACH PHASE OF THE INTERVIEW MUST BE DEMONSTRATED	
Plan	
Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
Fully complete a plan for the child's needs. Complete a Topic Identification Plan, listing the potential offences, essential elements and identifying all the relevant topics within D\B\A. Complete an individualised Scottish NICHD Protocol interview plan which was incorporated into the interview with the child.	Comment on the Plan for the Child's Needs Comment on the Topic Identification Plan Comment on the Interview Plan and the prompts for each phase

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Select appropriate example prompts for each phase of the interview	
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A. Introduction

Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
Introduce all involved and explanation of roles	Use age and developmentally appropriate language

B. Rapport Building and Narrative Training

Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
Engage the child in appropriate rapport	Demonstrate effective rapport Demonstrate using open-ended prompts
Encourage child's communication by using open-ended prompts	Actively listen

C. Explaining and Practicing Ground Rules

Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
Cover all Ground Rules and facilitate the child demonstrating their understanding of the rules.	Actively listen Identify and follow any cues Recognise and respond to any reluctance Offer non-suggestive support Display appropriate body language Avoid interrupting the child Use appropriate pace, pitch, and tone Use age and developmentally appropriate language If any of the ground rules or tests for understanding within the Protocol are missed, then the evaluators will need to address this with use of a development plan.

D. Further Rapport Building and Episodic Memory Training

Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
Identify an appropriate and meaningful event for practice narrative based on actual event.	Actively listen Identify and follow any cues Recognise and respond to any reluctance
Encourage child to practice remembering events using open ended prompts.	Offer non-suggestive support Display appropriate body language Avoid interrupting the child
Encourage child to practice retrieving specific details of the	Use appropriate pace, pitch, and tone Use age and developmentally appropriate language

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chosen event, demonstrating time segmenting and cued invitations within.	Demonstrate time segmenting cued invitations and cued invitations within and where this is not evidenced, then the evaluators will need to address this with the use of a development plan.
When required, demonstrate further examples of episodic memory training.	

E & F. Substantive Phase (including how do other people know)	
Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
Demonstrate appropriate transition to the substantive phase.	Attempt to elicit evidence from the child using non-suggestive open-ended prompts Use Free recall invitations appropriately Use Follow up invitations appropriately Use Time segmenting invitations appropriately Use Cued invitations appropriately Use Directive questions appropriately Avoid using suggestive questions Establish the details of the crime(s) Establish the essential elements of any crimes identified Establish the essential information required for any charges (where, when and who committed any crime) Cover the topics in the Topic Identification Plan appropriately Avoid asking questions about irrelevant topics Clarify missing and ambiguous information Clarify any ambiguities appropriately Explore any inconsistencies Correctly identify any missing forensic details. Probe for information about how other people know Does anyone else know? Has the child told anyone? *If the questioning strategy is not appropriate and open questioning techniques are not demonstrated, then evaluators must address this with a development plan.
Address any reluctance or resistance during transition to the substantive phase.	
Attempt to elicit evidence from the child using non-suggestive open-ended prompts.	
Use appropriate questioning strategy.	
Establish details of crime(s) Who, what, when, where, how.	
Establish how other people know.	

G. Ending the Interview	
Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
End the interview appropriately.	Thank the child for speaking to them Ask the child if there was anything else they wanted to speak about or tell the interviewer. Offer the child the opportunity to ask questions and answer them appropriately Inform child of the possibilities of further interviews

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	Provide contact details
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H. Overall	
Did the interviewer:	Comments
Apply the Scottish NICHD principles throughout the interview.	During the observation the interviewer is required to: continue to build and use rapport use appropriate question types show attempts to illicit free narrative recall use the Pairing technique throughout address reluctance by providing support to the child use breaks appropriately
Respond to the needs of the child.	Throughout the interview the interviewer needs to demonstrate: greeting the child appropriately responding to any immediate welfare issues establishing rapport and then the use of rapport using appropriate body language, voice tone and eye contact listening skills using language appropriate to the needs of the child adopt any previously known strategies. responding appropriately should the child appear to be moving out of their Window of Tolerance
Any additional comments on the interview.	Camera angles, audio and visual quality, and comment on areas of positive practice and areas to develop in practice

Part 2 – Second Interviewer

Assessor Guidance for evaluating practice of those undertaking role of the Second Interviewer

The Joint Investigative Interview - Second Interviewer	
Did the interviewer:	
Effectively undertake the role of second interviewer.	Interviewers are required to demonstrate the following: - Operating the recording equipment, maintaining focus upon the child and others present. - Recording salient points. including demeanour. - Supporting the lead interviewer to respond to the needs of the child. - If required assume the role of Lead interviewer. - Communicate with the Lead interviewer. - Review evidence and information and contribute to the development of the Interview Plan as required, during breaks.

3b. Appendix 2

National Joint Investigative Interviewer Practice Evaluation Toolkit

Lead Interviewer Name	
Second Interviewer Name	
VRI Number	
Date Interview Carried out	
Reviewer Names (list all in attendance for peer review)	
Date of Evaluation	
Type of Evaluation	Self ☐ Peer ☐ Manager ☐ External ☐
Date of feedback to lead interviewer	
Date of feedback to second interviewer (if required)	

<i>For External/Manager Evaluations only:</i>	
Is an Action Plan required Y\N	
Action Plan discussed with and when	

Part 1 – Lead Interviewer evaluation

The Joint Investigative Interview	
The Plan	
Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
Fully complete a plan for the child's needs.	
Complete a Topic Identification Plan, listing the potential offences, essential elements and identifying all of the relevant topics within D\B\A?	
Complete an individualised Scottish NICHD Protocol interview plan which was incorporated into the interview with the child?	
Select appropriate example prompts for each phase of the interview?	

A. Introduction	
Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
Introduce all involved and provided an explanation of roles?	

B. Rapport Building and Narrative Training	
Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)

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Engage the child in appropriate rapport?	
Encourage child's communication by using open-ended prompts?	

C. Explaining and Practising Ground Rules	
Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
Cover all five ground rules and facilitate the child demonstrating their understanding of the rules?	

D. Further Rapport Building and Episodic Memory Training	
Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
Identify an appropriate and meaningful event for practice narrative based on actual event?	
Encourage the child to practice remembering events using open ended prompts?	
Encourage the child to practice retrieving specific details of the chosen event, demonstrating	

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time segmenting and cued invitations within?	
When required, demonstrate further examples of episodic memory training?	

E & F. Substantive Phase (Including how other people know)	
Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
Demonstrate appropriate transition to the substantive phase?	
Address any reluctance or resistance during transition to the substantive phase?	
Attempt to elicit evidence from the child using non-suggestive open-ended prompts?	
Use appropriate questioning strategy?	
Establish details of crime(s)? Who, what, when, where, how	
Establish how other people know?	

G. Ending the Interview	
Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
End the interview appropriately?	

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Overall	
Did the interviewer:	Comments and examples (where applicable)
Apply the Scottish NICHHD principles throughout the interview?	
Respond to the needs of the child throughout the interview?	
Any additional comments on the interview. <i>(camera positioning/Sound/ 2nd interviewer questions all relevant to mention here)</i>	

Part 2 – Second Interviewer evaluation

The Joint Investigative Interview - Second Interviewer	
Did the interviewer:	
Effectively undertake the role of second interviewer	

3c. Appendix 3

Scottish Child Interview Model for Joint Investigative Interviewing Evidence Based Interviewer Practice – Research Series

Topic: Evaluation of Interview Practice

Joint Investigative Interviewer Evaluations - What does the research tell us?

The Scottish Child Interview Model includes evaluation of practice as a key component integral to the success of the model. It takes account of the extensive research that tells us that training programmes are unlikely to be effective in supporting improvements to practice unless complemented by extensive practice opportunities and regular practice-focussed feedback. In addition, research suggests that interviewers may need some time to consolidate learning following completion of their training and consistently integrate this into their practice.

The Evidence and Procedure Review, the original driver for change in Scotland, recognised and stressed that the role of Joint Investigative Interviewer involves specialist skills, therefore requiring “dedicated training, regular practice and on-going evaluation and feedback” and recommended that “on-going assessment and evaluation of interviewer’s practice should be built into the National Curricula as a training requirement.”¹ This recommendation is endorsed by the supporting research internationally which highlights the range of factors that are influential in improving forensic interview quality for children. The research notes that ‘only when training moves beyond the classroom, spaced over time, and involves extensive opportunities to consolidate learning and practice skills in contexts that ensure prompt feedback and guidance’ do we see the benefits of Interviewers and tutors’ investment in the process of improving practice operationalised. (Lamb et al 2018)

Research has consistently evidenced that interviewers benefit from good intensive training which improves aspects of their practice. However, intensive training alone was correlated strongly with improved knowledge about what interviewers *ought* to be doing rather than it resulting in them being able to translate this consistently over time into what they *actually* do when interviewing. (Lamb et al 2018, Johnston et al., 2015, Korkman et al., 2008, Wolfman et al., 2016)

It continues to be the case that departures from recommended practices exist, even in the context of specialised teams and where there are increased resources for interviewers, so it is important to acknowledge that even in these types of supportive conditions, interviewers must be engaged in a process of evaluating their practice to enable learning to take place (Johnson, Magnussen, Thoresen, Lonnum, Burrell & Melinder 2015).

¹ Recommendation number 8, Evidence and Procedure Review, Child and Vulnerable Witnesses Project, Summary of Recommendations from the Joint Investigative Interview work-stream project report June 2017

Development of the Scottish Child Interview Model took account of the literature which strongly supported the combination of a 'knowledge transmission model that is complemented by extensive practice opportunities and regular feedback' (Lamb 2016) when developing the new training for interviewers.

What influences interviewer behaviour to effect change and improve practice?

Interviewer behaviour is influenced by a number of factors. The first, quality of the initial training provided, has been addressed above. Secondly, interviewers need to have a structured interviewing model/protocol available to them that they can operationalise. This is now a central component of the Scottish Child Interview Model. Interviewers are required to follow the principles of the NICHD protocol which is evidence based and importantly was developed to take account of children's development, linguistic age and stage, context and relational experiences. It provides a framework for interviewers to structure their questioning effectively.

Building on this, interviewers need to learn to critically reflect on their practice, with objective feedback made readily available from others. Regular access to continuing professional development opportunities and practice focused supervision (different from workload management) supports the interviewer's ability to change their behaviour in the interview environment to create optimal conditions and deliver best practices for interviewing. These factors, when available with a backdrop of support, give individuals the best chance of making and sustaining improvements in their approach.

What is recommended for effective evaluation processes?

Studies have helped us to see that there is measurable value in providing interviewers with written and verbal feedback on interview practice, both in the training environment and beyond, into the workplace when undertaking real interviews with children.

The application of the NICHD interview protocol strongly supports the need for supervision, evaluation and feedback that is ongoing for interviewers practising in the field of forensic interviewing. These research findings are the result of repeated experimental demonstration of the impact of failing to do this, contrasted with findings of an improved picture when this quality control measure is applied. 'A key component of training with the NICHD protocol is the emphasis on continued supervision and feedback about interviewing performance' (Lamb, 2016; La Rooy et al., 2015)

A number of different studies have focused on interview review and feedback processes with results offering learning in relation to effectiveness in evaluation models. Working to improve interviewers' learning and development will ultimately translate to improved practice and experiences for children being interviewed.

Importantly, the greatest improvements in practice were seen when different forms of training were distributed frequently, immediately following the robust initial training. This "training over time" concept involved monthly day long peer sessions, supported by trainers, during which real life interviews were evaluated and analysed and both strengths and areas

for development were discussed, with verbal and written feedback provided (Lamb et al. 2018).

Over time, examination of interviewers' performance showed that in response to these evaluative training opportunities, interviewers performed better. (Price and Roberts 2011, Rischke et al. 2011) This was evidenced by their increased use of open-ended prompts when trying to illicit information from children. Interviewers were also noted to significantly delay their use of recognition prompts, which leads to less option posing and suggestive questioning practices or the 'delay of allegation related information by the interviewer'. This is important because these specific factors are crucial in improving the overall quality of the interview. Consistent application of this strategy increases the degree of credibility in the child's account.

What do interviewers need to do in practice to undertake effective evaluations?

Critical reflection involves the experience of looking at one's practice and having practice objectively reviewed by others. By assessing interview techniques using agreed criteria that supports the development of best practice, alternative techniques that are crucial for maintaining and developing interviewing skills can be kept in mind. To illustrate this point, an example of an "alternative technique" would be adjusting how a particular question is framed to improve its degree of openness or pairing a less open question type, for example a necessary option posing question, with an invitation.

However, critical reflection is more than just thinking about Joint Investigative Interview practice and technique. It is a way of critiquing practice in a systematic and rigorous way – helping interviewers to carefully consider their own practice and identify what could be improved and how. Critical reflection is essential for effective evaluation, learning and development and the process of change.

When supervision and feedback to forensic interviewers' ceases, research shows clearly that there is an adverse effect on interviewer performance. Quality is notably affected with fewer open-ended prompts employed. Open ended questioning practice adherence to the interview protocol diminish and the impact of this is that the child's account contains fewer details and more inconsistencies.

Research shows that interviewer's poor adherence to recommended questioning strategies may also be affected by the difficulties they seem to have accurately monitoring their own practices. (Agnew, Powell & Snow 2006, Wright at Powell 2006)

Various studies show that investigative interviewers find it hard to recognise their application of appropriately questioning strategies to their interview practice and there is often a difference between what type of questioning strategy they think they are applying and what they are actually applying. Importantly they can lose sight of the impact of their overall questioning strategy applied to their interview practice. It is important that interviewers come to understand that there is an impact on the quality and quantity of evidence obtained from the child or young person directly relative to their application of questioning structure and type.

Therefore, learning to self-evaluate one's own interviewing practice effectively includes being able to correctly identify the types of prompts used and then building upon this by learning to increase the use of more open prompts. Being able to do this is essential if good interviewing practice is to be maintained.

Drawing on research which examined the best approaches to support interviewers in recognising and improving their questioning strategies, two approaches are evidenced. The first is the opportunity to undertake mock interviews post initial training, because practicing using open prompts is strongly correlated with an ability to identify different prompts and question types when evaluating. The second is reviewing their own interview transcripts and highlighting the various types of questions used. Both these approaches support interviewers to achieve greater adherence to open ended questioning practice.

The challenges for effective evaluation

One key challenge that interviewers experience is accessing experienced and trained supervisors and evaluators (La Rooy, Lamb, & Memon, 2001; Powell & Barnett, 2015; Wolfman et al. 2016c). Another key challenge is time for learning, development, and supervision opportunities. Studies by Benson and Powell in 2015 and Wolfman et al in 2016 identified that managers often did not provide sufficient opportunities and protected time and space to complete activities such as self and peer evaluation, not recognising the positive impact in both the short and longer term this would have. Managers were often focused on the operational needs of their business area in the immediacy of the situation, and perhaps less able to see the benefits in a tangible way of both improving the effectiveness of the interview team and improving outcomes for children and young people.

Summary

Research is very clear and continues to demonstrate that experience, workload, and training background do not act as protective factors against undesirable practice. It has been shown that it is not sufficient to simply watch the interview recording and make comment on performance. The significance and complexity of the interview means that, to truly learn from one's practice, learners must be able to consider it in more detail than a few passing seconds (as they watch themselves ask a particular question on video) and must actively evaluate the impact of their question on the child's response.

In summary, evaluation is effective when there is a structure and guidance on how to undertake this. When interviewers have been asked to comment too generally on their practice there is no impact on interviewing performance. Interviewers who are able to objectively critique their interview by following a structured format, one that prompts them to consider particular aspects in detail, will ensure their self-evaluation is robust and likely to provide rich material to inform the individual's learning and development. Adherence to interviewing protocol, quality of questioning strategy, sufficiency of evidence gathering, knowledge of essential elements to inform prompts, overall interview structure and application of trauma informed principles are important features that must be considered in

each evaluation. This rich material can have even greater impact when shared with peers and the extent of the learning is both deepened and more widely shared.

Therefore, in response, the National JII Team have proposed a model of evaluation that has several components. Included is comprehensive training in methodologies and approaches that support interviewers to undertake effective evaluations and offer constructive feedback on their own and their peers' practice. The Interviewer Practice Development Model has also developed to address the needs of managers involved in evaluation with an emphasis on opportunities for shadowing available for advancing skills development in this area beyond initial training.

The recommended combination of individual, peer, and manager evaluations, in addition to ongoing access to the National JII Team and relevant experts in the field, will support improvements in practice stemming directly from evaluation activity. Interviewers, managers, and trainers will need to collaborate effectively, with the shared aim that investment in evaluation activity is valuable in pursuit of developing best practice in the field of Joint Investigative Interviewing for children in Scotland.

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