

# Supporting bereaved families and carers through the child death review process in Scotland

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## Introduction

The National Hub for reviewing and learning from the deaths of children and young people aims to ensure that every child and young person who dies in Scotland receives a high-quality review of the circumstances surrounding their death. It is important that we use what we learn from child death reviews (CDRs) to:

- give families and carers answers where possible
- identify and change circumstances that could otherwise lead to further deaths
- improve CDR processes, including any unintended negative impact on staff and bereaved families and carers.

The death of a child is probably the most traumatic event to happen within a family, so raising the issue of the child death review (CDR) process with bereaved family members and carers must be handled sensitively and with compassion.

## Methods

The National Hub, with the support of its third sector partners, conducted research with bereaved families and carers to understand their experiences of the CDR process. One of the recommendations in our resultant [report](#) highlighted the important role of clear and consistent communication. Responding to that feedback, the National Hub produced a [leaflet](#) that explains the CDR process in clear language to help bereaved families and carers understand:

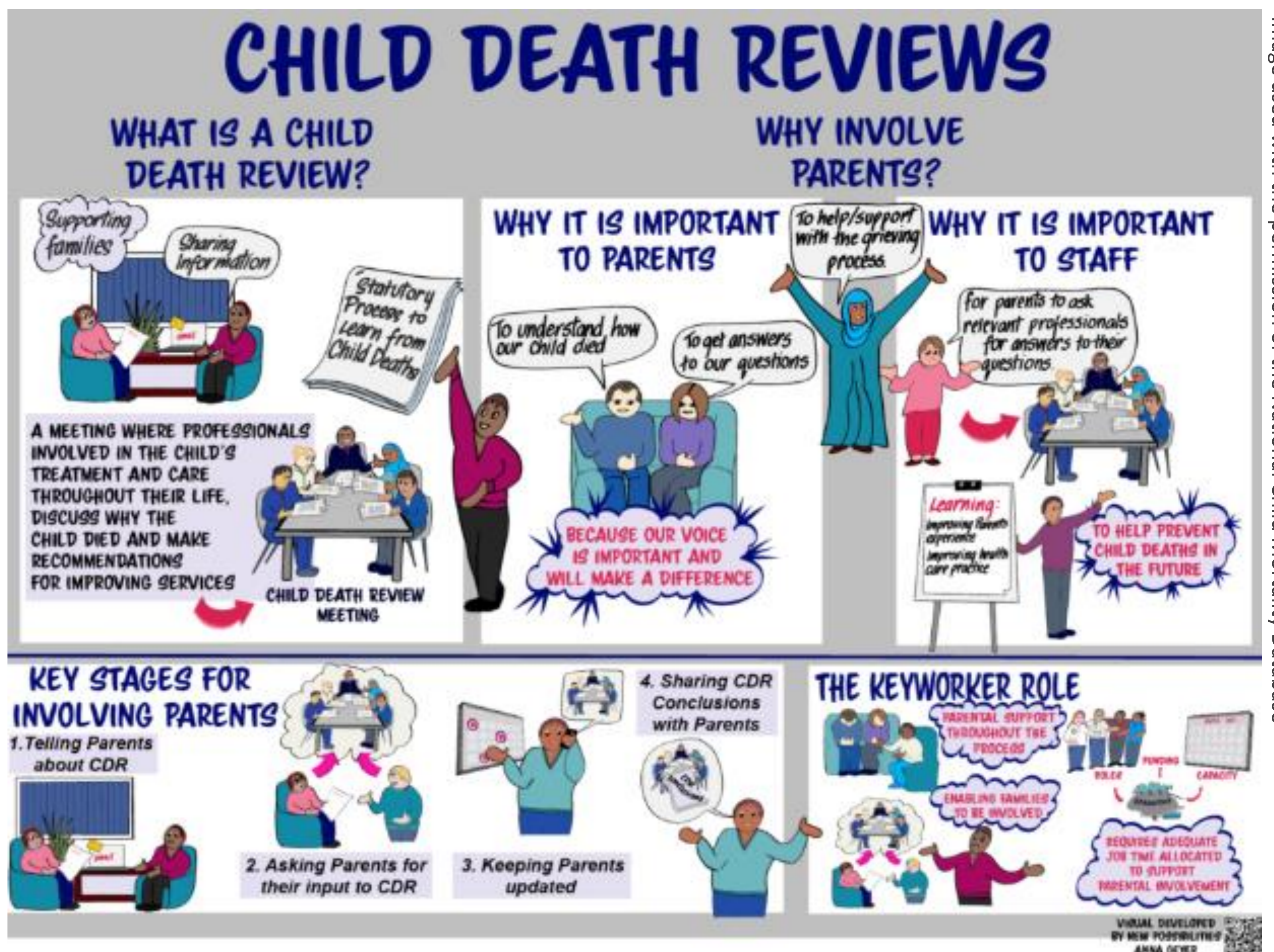


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- why a review is necessary
- how they can contribute their views and questions
- what to expect from their key contact
- where to find further resources and support.

## Outcomes

- The National Hub's CDR leaflet is distributed to bereaved families and carers primarily by NHS boards across Scotland.
- The leaflet can be printed or shared digitally. The digital version can be amended with the key contact's details and local support organisations.
- The National Hub is working with the National Child Mortality Database (NCMD) in England to create a version of their Easy

Read leaflet for use in Scotland.

- The [NCMD CDR toolkit](#) for supporting bereaved parents is already accessible for use in Scotland. It contains flow charts and templates for communicating compassionately with bereaved families and carers.

## Conclusions

Professionals working with parents, family members or carers who have experienced the death of a child are encouraged to:

- access the resources available from the CDR toolkit and
- share clear information about the CDR process, available from Healthcare Improvement Scotland's National Hub website.

Find out more about the [National Hub for reviewing and learning from the deaths of children and young people](#).

