How to complete the Bridge Partnership *worried about a child* referral form

A guide for family, friends and members of the public
In Step 1 input the details of the child that you are making the referral about.

In Step 2 provide as much information about family members or other people living in the home as possible.

Please give as much information as possible to aid the Bridge Partnership to identify the correct child and family.

In Step 3, use the options in the drop-down menu titled “Source” to identify who you are. This will likely be one of the following categories:

- Anonymous
- Individual – self
- Individual – acquaintance – inc neighbours etc
- Individual – other – inc strangers and MPs
- Individual – family member or relative or carer

Even if you wish to remain anonymous it is really helpful if you provide your contact details so that the Bridge can get in touch with you if we need to clarify information or gather further information. Your details will not be shared with the family.
Step 4 is where you will input the information which explains why you are making the referral and what service you are asking for.

As a family member, friend, or member of the public, if you have a safeguarding or welfare concern you do not have to attempt to talk to the parents/carers before making a referral. However, if you are making a referral for an Early Help service on behalf of the parent/carer, this can only be accepted if parents have consented to the referral.

You will generally only be able to fill out this section with the parent’s/carer’s response to the referral if you are making a referral for Early Help, or if the parent/carer knows you are making the referral about a safeguarding or welfare concern and has told you their view about it.
Use the drop-down menus titled “Primary presenting issue” and “Presenting Issues” to select a category which indicates the nature of the concern. This will assist the Bridge to prioritise the response to the referral.

If there are multiple concerns which mean several categories may be applicable, use your judgement to select which is the most significant concern.

If you are making a referral for an Early Help service, please pick this option in both drop-down menus.

Your knowledge of the child and family may be limited due to the way in which you know them or how you have interacted with them.

As a result you may not have any information which relates to some of the prompts given.

You should always be able to state what the worry is.

If you don’t have any information which is relevant in another section of the form (for example, information about the wider family) this is ok, but please state this clearly.

What are we worried about?

• List the concerns that you have identified and the impact on the child/family.
• Be clear what is happening now, what has happened in the past, and what you are worried might happen in future.
• Be clear what child/family member each concern relates to.
• If there are risks but you have taken action to try to manage them, tell us what you have done.

Be as descriptive as possible. For example, if you are raising concerns around poor home conditions, explain exactly what this looks like.
What is going well for this family and what resources/services are already in place?

- Please consider: presentation, health, education (attainment or attendance), engagement by parent, etc.
- What support is already in place from you, other professionals, family, or within the community?
- What family/friend/community support is available that could be put in place to try to address some of the worries?

“Complicating factors” are things which are not the main reason you are worried, but which might be making it more difficult for the family to address the worries and care for the children.

For example:
- A mother has disclosed to you she is being subjected to emotional abuse by her partner. This is your “worry”.
- You also think she may have additional learning needs which makes it hard for her to understand information given to her about the impact seeing the abuse has on her child. This is a “complicating factor”.

You should normally be able to identify something that is going well for the child/ren and family.

For example:
- A father attends school regularly and is verbally abusive and threatening to staff because he thinks they treat his son unfairly. The son is seeing this behaviour.
- Grandmother sometimes attends with father and is able to de-escalate father’s behaviour when she does.
What needs to change to make things better/safer for the child/ren?

- List changes to the situation of child/ren and family that you think are needed.
- What support do you think would be helpful for the child/ren and family in reducing the concerns?

Please tell us if there are any risks professionals need to be aware of when dealing with the situation.

For example:
- Suspected drug-taking equipment in the home, such as needles.
- Aggressive dogs in the home.