

SCMA Update on Health Visitors and Childminding

SCMA had been receiving reports from members around Scotland that Health Visitors in some areas have been increasingly advising parents that their children should be in a nursery rather than in a childminding setting.

To be clear, we do not believe that this advice is appropriate, nor that there is evidence to support this opinion. However, we are also aware of many cases in which Health Visitors can be very supportive of families using a childminder where Health Visitors have a good understanding of childminding and have seen the benefits for and positive impact on families themselves. In parallel, Health Visitors also provide the main referral source to our Community Childminding Services.

SCMA constructively engaged on this issue and was invited to present to a meeting of the Health Visiting Leads' Network (a network of those with lead responsibility for Health Visitors in all 15 Scottish NHS Board areas and of those involved in their teaching). This meeting took place last week, during which SCMA laid out the issues, and our offer to help improve understanding about childminding within Health Visitors.

SCMA's approach and offer was positively received, and we have been invited to develop some learning materials to support this purpose, which will be cascaded to Health Visitors throughout Scotland.

This is a very positive step in the right direction, and we're delighted that our efforts in this area will continue to foster a positive working relationship with Health Visitors and help to further their understanding of the benefits of childminding. We will continue to represent your interests and update you as this work progresses.