

Child Fatality Review #08-50
Region 2
Yakima County

This two-month-old Caucasian female died from viral pneumonia.

Case Overview

On September 4, 2008, this two-month-old infant died while in her mother's care. On two occasions, the child was taken to a hospital emergency room in the month prior to her death. She was living with her mother as her parents were separated and living apart. The mother was 20-years-old and her father 19-years-old at the time of the child's death.

After the deceased child was born, her mother was offered visiting nurse services as there was concern that she overfed her baby and did not properly mix the child's formula. The mother was provided safe sleep education. Eventually she refused any additional home health services.

On August 11, 2008, the mother brought the child into a hospital emergency room after the deceased child fell off a couch. The mother and baby were sleeping together at the time. The child was not injured and was not admitted to the hospital.

On September 2, 2008, the mother brought the child to the emergency room to be treated for vomiting and diarrhea. The deceased child was admitted for observation and was diagnosed with viral pneumonia and reflux. The following day the child was discharged as there was no respiratory distress and oxygen levels were good. The mother was instructed to use a wedge, a special pillow to allow the child to breathe better. The child died the morning of September 4, 2008.

Referral History

On August 22, 2008 the grandmother of the deceased child called Child Protective Services (CPS) intake to report the home in which the child resided was not clean or safe for a newborn baby. The grandmother described the home as having piles of garbage, newspapers, books, and clutter all over the house to the point that there is only a path through the house. The mother and newborn slept together on the couch because there is nowhere else for them to sleep. They were staying in a three bedroom home with four other adults. The only place to set the baby down in the home was on the floor or in the car seat. The mother said she wanted to move but did not have the resources. This referral was screened as information only.

Issues and Recommendations

Issue: The referral reported on August 22, 2008 was screened information only because there was no known address and did not meet the sufficiency screen.

Recommendation: As an additional resource, the intake worker can contact the visiting home health nurse database whenever they encounter a referral involving a newborn. If

there is an open case with the visiting nurse program, they can assist with address and contact information.