

## Nagalro Press Release

### **LEADING CHILD WELFARE PROFESSIONALS WARN OF UNACCEPTABLE RISKS ARISING FROM TIME MANAGED CAFCASS POLICIES**

For immediate release on 10 April 2018

Nagalro and seventeen other professional bodies and individuals have issued a Joint Position Statement dated 4 April 2018, setting out their concerns arising from a Cafcass policy document, '*Guidance on the Use of Professional Time to Benefit Children*'. A copy of the Statement is attached. Signatories include Nagalro, the Association of Lawyers for Children, the British Association of Social Workers, the National Association of Independent Reviewing Officers and CoramBAAF, together with four eminent social work professors and other concerned academics and practitioners.

The objections arise from a policy document issued by Cafcass in July 2017. The signatories to the statement call for the document to be withdrawn, or extensively amended.

Prior to the document being circulated to all Cafcass staff, including Family Court Advisors and Children's Guardians, there was no consultation with any of the independent professional social work bodies, whose members have extensive knowledge and experience about how the welfare and basic human rights of children should be protected, when they are the subjects of Family Court proceedings.

Amongst other things, the policy seeks to restrict, or ration, the amount of time which Cafcass staff should spend on individual children's cases. This, says Nagalro, conflicts with the duties which Parliament has imposed on Cafcass officers in the Children Act 1989 and other legislation and suggests that time-rationing policies can override the needs of individual children.

-ENDS-

For further please information contact: Nagalro office on 01372 818504 or [nagalro@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:nagalro@globalnet.co.uk)

#### **Notes to Editors:**

1. The Joint Position statement can be downloaded by clicking here:  
<http://www.nagalro.com/system/site/uploads/content/docs/2018%2004%2004%20Nagalro%20JPS%20with%20signatories.pdf>
2. The Cafcass Guidance on the Use of Professional Time to Benefit Children can be downloaded by clicking here:  
[http://www.nagalro.com/system/site/uploads/content/docs/guidance\\_on\\_the\\_use\\_of\\_professional\\_time\\_to\\_benefit\\_children\\_010717.pdf](http://www.nagalro.com/system/site/uploads/content/docs/guidance_on_the_use_of_professional_time_to_benefit_children_010717.pdf)

3. Nagalro is the professional association for Family Court Advisers, Children's Guardians and Independent Social Workers. Its members represent the interests of children in a range of public and private law proceedings. Nagalro members are senior, highly experienced children and family social workers who work in a variety of roles. Many work as independent social workers and risk assessors providing expert witness reports in a wide range of complex cases coming before the family courts; in fostering and adoption agencies; in independent practice providing therapeutic services; as academics; as supervisors, mentors and consultants. Members have significant experience as managers, chairs of Adoption Panels and other specialist social work practitioner roles.
4. The Nagalro website is at [www.nagalro.com](http://www.nagalro.com)