



East Sussex

ContactPoint will be the quick way to find out who else is working with the same child or young person, making it easier to deliver more coordinated support.

The development of ContactPoint continues to draw heavily on the experiences of local authority trailblazer pilots. East Sussex developed a basic online directory (known as an index) to enable more efficient communication across agencies. The index holds basic identifying information on children in their area, and contact details for practitioners working with a child.

Lucy Ruddy the Information Sharing and Assessment (ISA) Manager in East Sussex, explains:

"We are seeing benefits on a daily basis. Practitioners can find out what they need to know more easily and can make the contacts they need to more efficiently. They have better information to inform actions, communication has improved and there is better multi-agency working."

Helping schools access social services when they suspect a child is being abused

A disclosure of physical abuse was brought to the attention of the Child Protection lead in a secondary school. He had a vague recollection of a similar situation involving the child's sibling, several years ago. The family had moved address and changed their name since this time and the sibling was no longer resident in the family home. A check on the index meant he was able to identify the past name and address for the current child and search on these to find the sibling. He included this information on his referral and the social worker was able to investigate this new allegation with the historical information to hand.

Without an index there is no mechanism in the school files to seek information on siblings who are no longer at the school. If a new social worker had seen the family the connection may never have been made.

Reducing parental distress from inappropriate contact from services after a young person's death

When a child dies it is a PCT's responsibility to ensure those that are involved with the child are informed. A PCT practitioner was able to access the index to identify all practitioners and services involved with the young person and make immediate contact.

Without an index the PCT has no effective means of knowing who outside the NHS is involved, and if the child dies out of area it is even more unlikely that practitioners will be informed in a timely and effective way.

Helping social workers carry out accurate assessments of children at risk of abuse or neglect

A duty social worker, not yet authorised to use the index, was undertaking an initial assessment of a child following an

Trailblazer case study

allegation of abuse. He phoned the index team who, after verifying his identity and establishing the justification for his needing to know, accessed the index on his behalf. Three other services were involved, which the social worker then contacted.

Without an index, it would be difficult and time consuming to find out this information.

Continuity of health visiting for vulnerable families who move

A health visitor went on a routine visit to a child's home. On arrival she was told by the new tenants that the family had moved and that no forwarding address was available. The health visitor was able to identify the new address from the index, put on there by another service. She was then able to contact the new health visitor and pass on valuable historical information and thus ensure continuity of care.

Without an index, the health visitor would have been unaware of the family's destination and would not have the opportunity to share information unless contacted by the new practitioner.

Helping maintain contact with children with SEN who are withdrawn from school

A Special Educational Needs (SEN) caseworker who had been working with a child in a school environment was told that the child had left the area. She looked on the index and found a local address. The index also showed the current educational environment for the child as home educated. The SEN worker was able to notify the local authority service, which supports children with SEN who are educated at home, who had not been aware of this child.

Without the index, incorrect information about the whereabouts of children with significant and complex needs cannot easily be checked, and contact with such children can be lost.

For more information

Visit www.eastsussex.gov.uk/isa for more information about the East Sussex pilot or call the ISA team on 01323 767355.