



Gateshead Newcastle

Trailblazer case study

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. Gateshead and Newcastle 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.

Paul Brady the Information Sharing and Assessment (ISA) IT Manager in Gateshead Newcastle explains:

“Increasingly we are receiving reports from our partners that the index is becoming a useful tool to help them carry out their work effectively. Practitioners can make the contacts they need to more efficiently and are able to make decisions and take actions based on a fuller picture of a child’s circumstances.”

Helping Connexions re-engage young people who have stopped accessing the service after changing address

Gavin, a Local Area Co-ordinator for Connexions Tyne and Wear, was encountering problems trying to locate some young people who had lost touch with their personal advisors and stopped accessing the Connexions services.

The ISA team accessed the index for Gavin and managed to identify new addresses for the young people. Gavin was then able to pass these details onto Connexions personal advisors in their new location and they made contact with the young people. Most of the young people chose to re-engage with the Connexions services.

Without the index, Connexions staff would have found it very difficult to get in touch with these young people to re-engage them with their services and the young people would have missed out on the opportunities offered by Connections.

Helping social services locate children who move into their local area and who might be at risk

An anonymous referral posted on the Area Child Protection Committee website was brought to the attention of Chris, a Social Services Manager in Newcastle. The concern raised was about a family who were reported to have recently moved to Newcastle – no records on any members of the family existed on the social care system.

On accessing the index, Chris was able to establish the children’s current school and their address. The Social Services office in the area of the city in which they were living was notified and steps were taken to assess the family circumstances and identify the appropriate action required.

Without the index, Chris would have been unable to locate this family using his agency’s system and would have found it very time consuming to track them down manually.

Helping to inform referrals to Multi-Agency Panels

The Coordinator of the multi-agency Referral and Resource Panel within Gateshead Children’s Trust regularly uses the index to identify practitioners working with children that have been referred to the Panel. He can then ensure that they are able to contribute to the development of the support package for the child and that the most appropriate practitioner acts in the role of lead professional.

Without the information stored on the index it would be difficult and time consuming to track down all practitioners working with a child and undertake effective multi-agency working.

Keeping carers of children with disabilities in touch with services when they move address

The Gateshead Network for Children with Disabilities (CWD), a voluntary network, helps keep families up-to-date with the services available for children with disabilities. They send out newsletters and carers packs, and provide a discussion network for families.

It often happens that when families move address they forget to pass on their new contact details to CWD and they lose touch with this valuable service. Jessica, a CWD Network Co-ordinator, now uses the index on a regular basis to update her records and ensures that families, who want to, can easily resume contact with the service.

Without the index there would be no straightforward way of keeping contact with families who change address.

For more information

For more information about the Gateshead Newcastle case study, please contact the Press Team on 0191 433 2024.