



Case Study

Information Sharing Index - Lewisham

Background

Lewisham is one of the Information Sharing & Assessment (ISA) local authority trailblazers funded by government to test new ways of working to improve information sharing amongst practitioners working with children and young people.

One of the tools that Lewisham has developed to enable more efficient sharing of information is the Lewisham ISA (LISA) index. The index is an online record of children containing basic identifying information and contact details for practitioners working with them. Shirley Walker, the ISA Service Manager for Lewisham, explains:

"In my view the impact of the LISA Index on the quality and efficiency of service provision for vulnerable children and families can only go from strength to strength over time. Practitioners from a wide range of agencies, both voluntary and statutory are now able to come together with a family to create effective support packages. This has been achieved through being able to find out who else is involved with a child they are working with and what services are being delivered. This removes duplication and ensures that provision is coordinated"

Helping schools access services and support for children at risk of being excluded

A Special Educational Needs Coordinating Officer (SENCO) was concerned about a 9 year old boy who had recently joined her school. He was displaying challenging and aggressive behaviour, and was difficult to control. The SENCO wanted to find out a bit more about the boy's history and after securing consent from his mother requested that the authorised LISA professional advisor access the index.

The index had a record of his previous school and details of social work involvement. Following discussion with these practitioners the SENCO was then able to build a more holistic picture of the child's needs and work out the most appropriate actions to take.

Without an Index, the SENCO would not easily have been able to find out about the previous involvement of other practitioners and would have had to start her assessment from scratch.

Reducing duplication by informing practitioners of all agencies involved with a particular child

Hannah, a Learning Mentor, contacted the LISA team for advice about Carol, a twelve year old pupil with special educational needs. Her relationship with her mother had deteriorated and her behaviour at school was becoming unacceptable. She also had a history of self-harming and running away from home. Hannah accessed the LISA index and identified that there was practitioner involvement from education and social care.

Hannah met with Carol and her mother to explain the LISA service and sought and obtained consent to share information

with the other practitioners. Following some initial discussions with the other practitioners, Hannah set up a family support meeting so that they could all meet with Carol and her mother to develop a coordinated support plan.

Without an Index Hannah may have duplicated work already being undertaken by other practitioners.

Helping adult mental health workers ensure the needs of children form part of the carer's support plan

Susan, an adult mental health worker working with the mother of a one year old child, was becoming increasingly concerned about the mother's ability to care for her child when she is suffering from the symptoms of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. During these periods the mother becomes anxious and preoccupied about being infected by germs and fears contamination.

With the mother's consent, the LISA team accessed the index for Susan, to find out if there were any other practitioners working with the child. Susan wanted to ensure that they were fully aware of the situation and that together with the mother they could develop a support plan and carefully monitor the situation to ensure the child's needs were met. Through the index Susan was able to make contact with the other services involved. Social Services were identified and information about the nursery assistant and Health Visitor obtained.

Without an Index Susan could not have easily found out who else was involved with the child and be able quickly to contribute to the development of a preventative strategy.

For more information

Contact Lewisham media relations department on 020 8314 9001 for more information about this case study and the work of the LISA team.

Visit www.ecm.gov.uk/index to find out more about the development of a national index.