



ContactPoint

Fact Sheet

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.

This basic online directory will be available to authorised staff who need it to do their jobs. It is a key part of the **Every Child Matters** programme to improve outcomes for children.

Why do we need ContactPoint?

The purpose of ContactPoint is to help improve services to children with a strong emphasis on early intervention and prevention. Currently practitioners can spend days trying to find out who else is working with the same child or unknowingly duplicate work that is already being carried out by another service. ContactPoint has been designed to support the processes followed by those who work with children.

What will the benefits be?

Several local authority 'Trailblazers' have been piloting local directories (known as 'indexes'). They demonstrated that this type of tool produces some key benefits:

- less time trying to find other practitioners
- quicker assessment of whether a child is receiving universal services (education, primary health care);
- enables more effective multi-agency working which leads to better service experience for children and young people.

An essential requirement identified in the early stages of development was that ContactPoint must be a national system to ensure it works for children who receive services across, or move across local authority boundaries.

What information will be held on ContactPoint?

ContactPoint will only contain the following basic information:

- name, address, gender, date of birth and an identifying number of all children in England (up to age 18);
- name and contact details for:
 - parents or carers;
 - educational setting (e.g. school);
 - primary medical practitioner (e.g. GP practice); and
 - other services working with the child.

There will also be the facility to indicate if a practitioner is the lead professional for a child and/or if they have completed an assessment under the Common Assessment Framework.

Explicit consent will be required to record contact details for sensitive services (defined as sexual health, mental health and substance abuse). Access to this information will be restricted.

Consent will also be required for care leavers or those with learning difficulties to remain on ContactPoint up to age 25, to facilitate the transition to adult services.

ContactPoint will **NOT** contain any case information (such as case notes, assessments, medical data or exam results).

How will it be updated?

Wherever possible, ContactPoint will be automatically updated from existing systems, so that practitioners will not need to enter the same information twice.

Who will have access?

Access to ContactPoint will be restricted to authorised users who need it as part of their work. This will include those working in education, health, social care, youth justice and some voluntary organisations.

All users will be required to have enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosures. Users will be trained in the safe and secure use of the system and compliance with the Data Protection Act and Human Rights Act.

Authorised users will be able to access ContactPoint through a secure web link, through some existing case management systems or through another authorised user. It will not be possible for any user to access any case management systems or case data held by another agency through ContactPoint.

How will you ensure it will be secure?

The security of ContactPoint is of paramount importance. The design and implementation is being reviewed by independent security experts throughout its development. To access ContactPoint, users will need a username, a pin code, a personal security token and a password. Every access will be detailed in the audit trail, which will be reviewed regularly.

What is the legislative basis?

The Regulations, which came into force on 1st August 2007, provide the legal framework for ContactPoint under section 12 of the Children Act 2004.

Guidance to support the operation of ContactPoint is currently being developed. The public consultation on the draft guidance closed on 27th July; the final version will be published in the Autumn 2007.

When will ContactPoint be available?

ContactPoint will be made available to local authorities and national partners in England during 2008, starting in the North West from Spring 2008.