

The Integrated Children's System

– a shared experience



The Integrated Children's System (ICS) is going to mean a lot to all those who work in social care – from practitioners and their managers to the young people they seek to help.

Put simply, this new electronic records management system will change the way social care workers log information and communicate with each other. Rather than relying on paper records and the risk of duplicated content, practitioners will be able to input and share data such as case notes and create truly accountable records.

All of this sounds great; here is a system that will enable social care workers to be more efficient, achieve best practice, and enhance the service we provide to children and young people. However, this government driven initiative - mandatory for all

councils - means a sizeable adjustment for the staff it affects. It means that they now need to take the time to learn a new system; an extra task in their already busy days.

ICS Project manager Nick Moore and social care development manager Keith Shaw quickly realised that the social practitioners' knowledge of their jobs - their personal experience of best practice were the best tools available to inform how they train the staff in this new system. Who better than they to help design the process? ICS is mandatory, but how we teach the system and the templates we use, these are our choices. The pair understood that the knowledge and understanding of our social practitioners would need to be sought in order to deliver the most effective method of training. They responded by inviting the social care workers to two highly interactive workshops.

Creating a shared vision...the workshops

Staff were asked to interview each other, asking for examples of personal best practice. They debated what had worked effectively in past social care electronic systems - and what they hoped ICS would achieve. They formed groups and identified common themes, drew pictures and wrote poems that expressed their vision of high performance with ICS. These creative, thought provoking sessions allowed staff to listen and talk to each other and reach a shared understanding and vision.

The workshops proved a success, allowing Nick and Keith to draw upon a real diversity of experiences to underpin future training sessions. Nick said: "We have achieved a new and shared understanding of outstanding practice which includes the most dynamic and mutually effective use of ICS and other joint working support systems. We have imagined and begun the design of our ideal and preferred future in which best practice is clear, supported and happening all the time."



From 31 March all social care practitioners and their managers will be using ICS. To find out more, please contact Nick.moore@croydon.gov.uk

The Fell Road decant: how was it for you?

In our November/December edition of the Loop we told you about the Fell Road decant. We have begun asking for feedback from the staff who moved buildings due to the closing of the Fell Road site; here is what we have learned so far:

- Over 62% of you thought the communications leading up to your move were good to excellent.
- However, you would prefer to be consulted about your new locations so that you can vet the facilities.

- Although most of you felt easily able to fulfil your role in your new location, you considered the office equipment to be only adequate.
- You would have preferred a more extensive building induction.
- Overall you felt the level of disruption had been minimal and you were able to get back to your work routine quickly.