

# **Report on the findings of the quarterly audit of children's social care records and update on arrangements for archiving and records management.**

## **1. Background**

This report provides a summary of the findings and recommendations of the quarterly audit of records conducted by managers in Children and Families social care services. The report also provides an update on arrangements for the archiving of records and the future development of an Electronic Social Care Record (ESCR) for children in receipt of services provided by children's social care services within Education and Children's Services.

## **2. Summary of findings of the quarterly audit.**

The audit is carried out by Team Managers within each service area and the service manager produces an overview report for the whole service. The findings and recommendations set out below are a summary of service managers overview reports.

The audit demonstrates a commitment from managers and staff to undertake audits and improve on the quality of recording. The audit further demonstrates consistently improving practice but also a need to address the continuing variability within teams in the standard of recording.

There is some evidence of the audit outcomes being discussed in supervision and issues being addressed with staff through the use of live records on the electronic system. The use of auditing activity is contributing to evidencing good practice and highlighting areas for development. Audits of records provide a key element to performance management processes.

Particular issues that need to be addressed are:

- Ensuring a consistent quality within and across teams
- Keeping records up to date
- The need to regularly update the chronology on file
- Case recording to strengthen analysis.
- Continue to develop evidence based recording
- Progress in relation to planned outcomes to be evidenced more clearly.

As a result of the audit there are a range of developments and management supports being put in place in to assist the continued improvement of

recording practice.

### **3. Archiving arrangements**

Archived records are now stored and managed by a company who specialise in the secure management of information. Files which are sent for storage are clearly labelled and have unique identifying information which is recorded on a database which is assessable to staff. Documentation is not removed for storage with out a clear review / destruction date which is determined by statutory requirements which are strictly monitored. In addition, each service area retains a database of all documentation despatched for storage. There is an efficient process for secure retrieval of documents when required.

### **4. Electronic Social Care Records**

Previously reported was the implementation of the Electronic Integrated Children's System (ICS), which is an electronic method for recording all activity, relating to work with children carried out under statutory responsibilities. In order to build on the electronic record that this system provides, additional elements will be added to the system, which will enable paper documentation to be scanned in a tightly controlled manor, which can be accessed as part of the ICS system.

This development will provide a comprehensive Electronic Social Care Record (ESCR). The protocols around the scanning of documentation are extensive and designed to ensure robust procedures for document management. There are a range of benefits in having ESCR which include safe storage and document retrieval, never the less it will still be appropriate and good practice to retain some original documentation.