

# Child Protection – Information Sharing

## Protecting children when out of area

Health and social care staff need to share information to help them provide better care and earlier interventions for children who are considered vulnerable and at risk.

There are 152 local authorities and more than 1,200 unscheduled healthcare settings in England (such as emergency departments, walk-in centres, and maternity units) using more than 75 different computer systems.

The Child Protection – Information Sharing project (CP-IS) is connecting these systems and helping sites to improve business processes so essential information can be shared securely.

### Hackney Council

The inner London borough of Hackney is one of the most densely populated in the capital, and the second most deprived local authority area in England. Hackney Council went live with CP-IS in December 2016. At the time, 640 children in the area were either looked after or subject to a child protection plan (including unborn children).

Joanne Ridgley, the Social Care Practice Lead at Hackney Council during the implementation of CP-IS, describes how CP-IS automatic notifications are helping to protect children when they present for care in other parts of the country.

“Child C was a looked after child who went to visit family in the south of England. Whilst there, Child C presented at an unscheduled care setting with a panic attack which affected their breathing.

“On checking the demographic details, a staff member saw that there was a CP-IS child care alert on Child C’s record. The child care alert showed that the young person was a looked after child. Knowing this additional information, more probing questions were asked about the cause of the panic attack. At this point Child C disclosed that the panic attack was brought on as a result of being pushed by a family member. This disclosure resulted in the staff member having a conversation with a social worker and making a safeguarding referral to the local authority.”

“As Child C had presented at an unscheduled care setting that had implemented CP-IS, an automatic notification was sent to the child’s originating local authority (Hackney).

**Helping health and social care staff to share information and better protect society’s most vulnerable children.**

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“The child’s social worker contacted the unscheduled care setting to find out about the incident and the action that had been taken.

“A safeguarding referral was made and an investigation was initiated by the police (a Section 47 enquiry) with the visited local authority. This not only protected the visiting looked after child from the adult perpetrator, but potentially other children too.”

Without CP-IS being in place, this young person may have been seen, treated and discharged without a safeguarding referral being made. The information sharing between the two local authorities may not have happened and appropriate follow up may not have occurred. When contacted by their social worker the family failed to mention the incident.

**“The fact that the CP-IS automatic notification came from another part of England, combined with the fact that this made the staff member there probe more, meant that the social worker had a more holistic view of Child’s C’s case.”**

**Joanne Ridgley,**  
Social Care Practice Lead,  
Hackney Council

Through CP-IS, health and social care colleagues across agencies were better enabled to work together to share information about this young person. This information positively influenced safeguarding practice and enabled a more holistic approach to Child C’s care.

### Impact of CP-IS

- Having access to CP-IS information promotes the duty of care and is paramount to the child’s safety and well-being.
- Clinical decision-making and outcomes in unscheduled care settings are enhanced because staff can see via CP-IS that a child is subject to a child protection plan or is a looked after child.
- The safeguarding of vulnerable children when visiting unscheduled healthcare settings outside of their local area is enhanced through better information sharing.
- Information is automatically made available to social care staff at the child’s home local authority which enables appropriate follow up.

CP-IS is currently being introduced to local authorities and unscheduled healthcare settings across England.

For more information, please go to [www.digital.nhs.uk/cpis](http://www.digital.nhs.uk/cpis)