

# Child Protection – Information Sharing

## Protecting unborn children subject to child protection plans

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.

### East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust provides acute healthcare services to a population of approximately half a million people living in and around Stevenage, Hertford and Welwyn Garden City. The trust went live with CP-IS in April 2015.

We met with Christina Kelly, the trust's Named Nurse for Safeguarding, to hear about how CP-IS had helped them work with the local social care team to care for a vulnerable girl and her unborn child;

**“What we've found really helpful is that CP-IS will alert us if a child we're treating has a child protection plan in place, including unborn children that are subject to a plan.”**

The system will also tell us if a child is looked after by the local authority, along with when and how often that child has attended for emergency treatment regardless of where they are in the country. This can help us identify any patterns of abuse or neglect as well as form a better understanding of their personal circumstances.

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

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“We had a recent case where an adolescent girl had taken an overdose. She was brought in by ambulance and taken to our emergency department. At the point of entering her details into our IT system, CP-IS alerted us that she was a looked after child. There was also a second CP-IS flag that told us she was pregnant and the unborn child was subject to a child protection plan.

“The girl had not told the ambulance crew she was pregnant and did not have an obvious baby bump. Without CP-IS making the information available to us, we wouldn’t have known about her condition.

“As soon as we discovered she was pregnant we were able to make a better informed clinical assessment and ensure that both the girl and her unborn child received the safest, most appropriate multi-agency care.

“As well as providing important child protection information, CP-IS also provides a contact number for the social care team responsible so it is clear who to contact. In this case, the triage nurse called the social care team right away. Information was shared and a decision was taken to admit the girl so the allocated social worker could visit and review the situation before she was discharged.

“In this case, CP-IS played a significant part in supporting multi-agency efforts to achieve the best outcome for the young person and her unborn child.”

**Christina Kelly,**  
Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children,  
East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

### 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.
- CP-IS alerts staff in unscheduled care settings if a child is a looked after child or subject to a child protection plan (including unborn children) and this aids clinical decision-making and outcomes.
- In this case, CP-IS helped health and social care staff to work more closely together to ensure the health and well-being of a vulnerable child and her unborn baby.

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)