

16 February 2007

Dear Colleague,

### **Introducing a name for the Information Sharing Index**

I am pleased to be able to tell you that the national Information Sharing Index, part of the Every Child Matters programme to improve outcomes for children, is to be known as 'ContactPoint', with immediate effect. The name will be supported by the strapline and graphic:



ContactPoint will provide a quick way for those working with children and young people to find out who else is working with the same child or young person, making it easier to deliver more coordinated support. It will be available to authorised staff who need it to do their jobs.

I am sure everyone would agree that it is important for this national tool to have a name. I have been delighted by the level of stakeholder engagement and support this Project has received. It was important, therefore, that we consulted widely before deciding upon a name. More than 400 stakeholders were consulted – including children, young people and families. A consensus emerged that the identity needed to clearly state what the tool was and what it would do (and, in doing so, make clear what it would not do). I feel that ContactPoint does that. It is also important that the identity differentiates the national tool from pilot local indexes. Our stakeholders made clear that the term 'Information Sharing Index' did not meet this aim. I am very grateful to all of those who contributed to this important exercise.

The website [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/contactpoint](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/contactpoint) will include (from 19 Feb) updated information about the tool, including the ContactPoint Fact Sheet.

In addition, I am enclosing a Question & Answer document explaining the rationale.

Of course it will take time for ContactPoint to become a familiar name. Our immediate priority is to update our public materials. However, over time and with your support we would hope that we will soon all be referring to ContactPoint rather than Information Sharing Index. Achieving consistency across the board will make a big difference to the success of our communications.

If you have any questions about the identity, please get in touch with your usual contact here in the National Team or with our Communications team on 020 7273 5093.

Thank you for your help in this. We look forward to continuing to work with you towards the successful implementation of ContactPoint.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christine Goodfellow". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name and last name clearly legible.

Christine Goodfellow  
Project Director, ContactPoint

## **Introducing the name ContactPoint – the rationale**

### **Questions & Answers**

#### **Q: Why have you changed the name of the Information Sharing Index?**

A: 'Information Sharing Index' was a working title adopted for the national tool. As we move further into the implementation phase, we need to have a name that distinguishes this national tool from the various pilot indexes being used by Trailblazer local authorities which have various different names.

We need a simple but descriptive name that is more transparent, to help people understand as easily as possible what the new tool is, why it is being introduced, and how it can support those working with children. Research has shown that 'Information Sharing Index' does not communicate what the tool is designed to do.

#### **Q: What was wrong with 'Information Sharing Index' as a name?**

A: We know that there is general misinformation about the national tool. Independent research has confirmed that some of the misinformation is likely to be as a result of the names used to describe it – 'Information Sharing Index', 'Index' or (sometimes) 'Children's Index'. We know that people find the terms confusing, suggesting the tool is something that it isn't (such as a detailed case management database) and creating concerns that there is a lot of information on it that people will be able to access.

#### **Q: How did you decide on the name?**

A: Firstly, we carried out research to establish whether the existing terms were appropriate, and to look at the sort of name and identity that people would find helpful. We then developed ideas and obtained feedback on specific names and descriptors. Approximately 400 people have been consulted (including children, young people, parents/carers, social workers, GPs, health visitors, child and adolescent mental health workers, midwives & children's nurses, teachers, education support staff, voluntary & community support organisations, youth offending teams/workers, early years workers and operational managers). We also held workshops with the ContactPoint Project's Local Authority Implementation Support Group and sought the input of the National ContactPoint Team and DfES Communications Directorate.

The research undertaken suggested that stakeholders wanted an identity with clarity, simplicity, and a 'does what it says on the tin' type approach.

ContactPoint was selected because it was best felt to meet these requirements and the words were well-received across all stakeholder groups.

**Q: Will there be a logo? If so, will we be able to put this on materials we produce?**

A: There is a graphic which can be used to help communicate the identity. Guidelines for the use of the identity, including the graphic, are being sent to all Implementation Coordinators and Local Implementation Managers. These explain when the image can be used, who can use it, and they also advise on the use of language associated with ContactPoint.

**Q: How are you launching the identity?**

A: We will be informing stakeholders of the ContactPoint identity on a phased basis and aiming to minimise any cost and effort that might be incurred.

**Q: Why haven't we had an identity before now?**

A: We are still in early stages of implementation and communications planning. Other than with those working in Trailblazer areas or implementation teams, the term 'Information Sharing Index' is not widely-known (or understood). Local authorities are only now just starting formal communications planning and activities. It is clear that, despite recent media attention, the majority of professionals and the general public are not aware of ContactPoint. At this stage we should not expect them to be – our communications strategy is looking to time mass communications to these groups at a later stage of implementation when it will have a better impact.

**Q: Does this mean the names of local indexes have to change?**

A: No. The local authority Trailblazers have piloted local index approaches, which are known under various different names and these will continue until the national tool is available. The experiences of the Trailblazers have fed into the consideration of naming for the national tool which will need a simple, consistently used name and identity across England. The national project team will be providing guidance on managing the transition to use of the name ContactPoint when referring to the forthcoming national tool – the term 'index' will still apply to local variations.