



Integrated Working The Common Assessment Framework Adoption of the National electronic CAF System ("Ne-CAF")

Introduction:

On 17th December 2009 the CAF Project Board looked at the available options for introduction of an electronic CAF system in Bradford.

It was decided that Bradford will adopt the National e-CAF system currently under development by the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF)

We currently have only basic information about the system, but will be shown a first 'live' demonstration in mid January 2010.

So what is "Ne-CAF"?

Ne-CAF will be a web-based IT system accessible by staff from any PC using a security fob. (Similar to those currently in use within Children's Services). It:

- Provides the facility for secure recording of the information gained by all agencies during the CAF process.
- Will be linked to ContactPoint to allow authorised practitioners to identify that a CAF assessment exists for an individual child.
- Has the potential to be linked to other information databases within Children's Services.
- Records "Consent" given by parents or young people and restricts practitioner access accordingly.
- Allows individual practitioners to initiate a CAF record and identify other practitioners involved in the TAC.
- Presents each TAC practitioner with a single screen overview of the CAF work which they are involved in
- Enables all practitioners involved in the TAC to update their own actions on the system to facilitate information sharing.
- Provides a messaging facility between TAC practitioners.
- Generates 'alerts' to notify TAC practitioners of review dates.
- Replicates the existing CAF forms and processes relating to: Early identification of need; Assessment; Action Planning and Review.
- Produces both local operational and centrally reportable statistics.
- Supports archiving and purging of data.

[Based on the overview provided by DCSF in September 2009]

And How will NeCAF work?

National eCAF will guide practitioners through the standard CAF process they are already familiar with; and the user-friendly system screens are closely aligned with the CAF Forms and related guidance issued by the CWDC.

Before beginning a new CAF on the system, the practitioner will search [ContactPoint](#) to see whether a CAF already exists, so they can make contact, work together and not duplicate work.

With the informed and explicit consent of a child or young person (or their parent/carer where appropriate), a practitioner will enter information gathered through the CAF process, including any agreed actions to meet the additional needs identified. Other authorised and agreed team around the child (TAC) practitioners can view this information, update their own actions, and enter relevant information onto the system.

The TAC can be located in any area of the country and within any organisation, working together to provide coordinated and effective services to the child or young person.

Messages can be sent securely within the system and alerts can be set to notify the TAC of review dates, updates, actions and many other functions.

National eCAF will automatically notify ContactPoint that a CAF has been created, to ensure practitioners can contact each other and work together more effectively, and not duplicate work.

And...What are the expected benefits of Ne-CAF?

National eCAF

- e-enablement of CAF**
 - CA**
 - Supports early identification of needs** before problems escalate
 - Faster, more effective service provision:** builds a holistic picture of a child/young person's needs
 - Reduces repetition for children/families and supports better practitioner time management:** practitioners build on existing information rather than start from scratch
 - Promotes a **shared, common language** amongst practitioners
 - Enables **more appropriate referrals** to specialist services
 - Access to shared information:** quicker and easier access to the most up-to-date CAF information and the progress of actions and service provision
 - Smooths process** of bringing practitioners into a team around the child
 - Management information:** provides MI for local management and service planning
- Cross-border, multi-agency working:** the system works across geographic and organisational boundaries
- Standardisation:** promotes a standard, best practice CAF process
- Transparency and visibility:** of the work of other LAs/agencies in supporting a child/young person
- Improves service experience and continuity of care** for children/families accessing services across different areas
- Built-in consent process** that is clear, consistent, transparent and mandatory
- Secure, fast information sharing** within the system (avoids email, post, fax, photocopying)
- Reporting functionality:** in-depth and extensive MI capability
- DCSF covers costs** of design, build, hosting, software licences, IT support, business support and Level 1 training

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18th December 2009
(Developed from DCSF Material.)