



## **Bristol City Council Care Direct Process Change**

### **Communication for BSAB 12/03/18**

#### **Context**

Bristol City Council's Better Lives Programme is working to improve the effectiveness of Care Direct which is the front door into Adult Social Care and Safeguarding.

Demand is rising and the Care Direct team is under increasing pressure to answer and respond to high volumes of calls and emails. We need Care Direct to be operating as efficiently and effectively as possible to continue to meet the needs of Bristol's citizens and to keep people safe.

#### **Challenge**

Through detailed analysis of 290 emails (of which 106 were Safeguarding) received by Care Direct over two days we identified several areas that are time consuming to manage and sometimes cause delays to any actions needed:

1. No two emails are the same meaning that each email has to be approached as a new piece of work
2. A vast range of different, and often out of date, referral forms are used and the quality of information provided is sometimes poor (Safeguarding referral forms are more consistent than Adult Social Care referral forms)
3. About 30% of emails received do not have any type of form or document attached and the quality of information provided is sometimes poor
4. Contact details are not always clearly provided
5. Consent is not always provided

#### **Solution**

We identified that there were some simple improvements we could make to support the Care Direct team to process emails more quickly and, in doing so, free up more time to spend talking to people about the support they need to live independently in their homes for as long as possible:

1. Apply consistency to email contacts by asking everyone to use the web form and turning off the fax function (Care Direct receives an average of only 4 faxes per day and they arrive directly into the mailbox)
2. Make it mandatory to provide contact details on the web form
3. Make it mandatory to evidence consent on the web form

#### **What Does This Mean for Referrers?**

From 1 April 2018:

- All referrers will need to use the existing secure web forms to contact Care Direct and we are making the necessary changes at the moment:
  - [Adult Care Referral Form](#)
  - [Safeguarding Referral Form](#) (this web form will be the same as the current referral form agreed by BSAB)
- The contact details and consent sections will be mandatory on the web form; if a referrer is unable to get consent then they will have the opportunity to explain why and this won't prevent them from submitting the form
- There will be a facility to attach referral forms and supporting documents that would normally be attached to an email
- Web forms will be securely and automatically sent to the Care Direct mailbox in the same way as they are now
- Referrers will receive a message confirming that the form has been sent

NB. All referrers that email direct to the Care Direct mailbox after 1 April 2018 will be asked to resubmit using the web form. Care Direct will monitor this and action anything urgent and work with the referrer to ensure that they use the web form in future.

From 26 February 2018 we have been informing referrers of this change via the Care Direct automated response which is sent to all emails; please see appendix 1.

### Next Steps

This is the first phase of the channel shift from emails to the web form to mitigate the challenges described above.

The second phase will be to make it mandatory for referrers to complete the whole web form and to not attach any other kind of Adult Social Care or Safeguarding referral form (there will be a facility to provide supporting documents).

We will be making exceptions for some organisations such as emergency services who will continue to be allowed to attach their own referral forms to the web form.

We are hoping to introduce the second phase alongside the Information, Advice and Guidance and Self-Assessment Tool that we will be implementing later this year. Providers will be given plenty of advance notice and the changes will be communicated to them and to the BSAB.

For more information please email Better Lives at [better.lives@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:better.lives@bristol.gov.uk).

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### Appendix 1

#### **Important Notice**

To make sure we can process referrals as quickly as possible we need you to provide us with the right information. To help you do this we are making some changes to the way we receive referrals.

#### **We will no longer be accepting emails directly to this mailbox from 1 April 2018**

We will be asking you to resubmit your enquiry using the form on our website from 1 April 2018 [[https://www.bristol.gov.uk/en\\_US/social-care-health/adult-care-referral-form](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/en_US/social-care-health/adult-care-referral-form)] (the form allows you to attach documents).

Please speak to a Care Direct advisor (0117 922 2700) if you need help to use the form.

#### **We will no longer be accepting safeguarding referrals directly to this mailbox from 1 April 2018**

We will be asking you to resubmit your enquiry using the form on our website from 1 April 2018 [[https://www.bristol.gov.uk/en\\_US/social-care-health/report-suspected-abuse-safeguarding-adults-at-risk](https://www.bristol.gov.uk/en_US/social-care-health/report-suspected-abuse-safeguarding-adults-at-risk)] (the form allows you to attach documents).

Please speak to a Care Direct advisor (0117 922 2700) if you need help to use the form.

#### **We will no longer be accepting faxes from 1 April 2018**

We will be turning off the fax function from 1 April 2018.

Please speak to a Care Direct advisor (0117 922 2700) if you need support to use an alternative contact method.

This is part of a range of improvements we are making to our processes so that the Care Direct team can spend more time talking to people about the support they need to live independently in their homes for as long as possible.