

Seven golden rules to information sharing

Sharing of information between practitioners and organisations is essential for effective identification, assessment, risk management and service provision. Early sharing of information is the key to providing effective early help where there are emerging problems.

The GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children and young people safe. Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children and adults.

1

Remember that the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are **not barriers** to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.

2

Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

3

Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.

4

Where possible, **share information with consent**, and where possible, **respect the wishes** of those who do not consent to having their information shared.

Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information **without consent** if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. **You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.**

When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, **be clear** of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.

5

Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.

6

Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).

7

Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.