Justifications for Showing Service Involvement Information

Overview of the project

Family Context enables social workers to better support children and families. The tool allows social workers to easily access service involvement information on relevant individuals in order to then facilitate conversations with lead practitioners.

The four services whose information will be included in the tool are: School, Housing, Adult Social Care and Police. These have been chosen because they are recognised as providing significant value to social workers.

Introduction

It is important that Family Context facilitates conversations with other practitioners. Lots of testing has been done to determine the minimum level of information we need to show on an individual's involvement with each of these services for this to happen. Through user research we have found that it is necessary to provide social workers with some basic information around an individual's involvement with a service, as well as the contact details for practitioners at that service.

The details of service involvement information that will be displayed in the tool has been tested with social workers throughout the lifespan of the project. This includes:

- Four rounds of user research with 23 social workers during Alpha
- Three rounds of user research with 22 social workers during Beta

The justification for providing the specific information included for each service is included below. It combines social workers' perspectives through the multiple round of user research.

School Data

Having school contact information readily available is useful because schools are usually the first point of contact for social workers to find out information about a child. Schools have the most contact with children and have usually built some relationships with relevant family members. They also tend to have up-to-date information of the relevant family members on their database, which is valuable for social workers to know. This makes school a useful source for providing initial context on the child and their family.

Data fields	Justification
Service involvement	Informs social workers if the child attends school and whether there is a need for further exploration.
School name	
School admission type	*"School information is very important"* *"It's useful to confirm that a child is still at a school"*

Contact	This information is necessary so that social workers can easily contact and have conversations with the relevant people at school. *"Teachers know the child well and that is the best source of information usually. Really good to speak with the school."* *"Sometimes, I get in touch with school to get current phone numbers for families."*
Date current as of	These fields help social workers to trust the data and know whether it is relevant and up-to-date.
Coverage start date and coverage end date	
Coverage geographic area	

Housing

Housing data helps social workers to get a more complete picture of existing and potential needs by flagging risks that have not been captured by other systems and facilitating conversations with housing officers. For example, the data may show if a family was struggling to pay for their rent each month, or a conversation may reveal that there are a number of fixes in their house that needs attention. In this way, housing information can provide an opportunity for social workers to build trust with a family by helping to resolve some of their basic housing related needs.

Data fields	Justification
Service involvement	Informs social workers if any of the relevant individuals to a case are involved with Housing, and if there is a need for further exploration. *"Would contact housing officer that I wouldn't otherwise."*
Housing association	
Contact	This information is necessary so that social workers can easily contact and have conversations with the relevant housing officers. *"Knowing the housing officer is really helpful."*
Anti-social behaviour	Helps social workers to identify risks around the family's basic needs and where further support may be required.

Rent arrears	*"Looking at housing, I'd be looking for: how secure is [the] tenancy; [are there] any concerns from neighbours; and how does he manage his tenancy?"*
Notice seeking possessions	*"Housing information could also help me build relationship with the family if they complain for instance about housing fixes that need to be done. I could contact the person in charge of it and chase it for them."*
Eviction	*"Would be helpful to have a lot of the information in advance of the conversation with the family."*
Date current as of	These fields help social workers to trust the data and know whether it is relevant and up-to-date.
Coverage start date and coverage end date	
Coverage geographic area	

Adult Social Care (ADSC)

Access to ADSC data enables joint working, which ensures a more holistic approach to supporting families and meeting their needs.

Data fields	Justification
Service involvement	Informs social workers if any of the relevant individuals to a case are involved with Adult Social Care, and if there is a need for further exploration.
Local authority organisation	
Contact	This information is necessary so that social workers can easily contact and have conversations with the relevant social workers. *"I would definitely call [an] adult social care practitioner if I had the contact details"* *"I have contacted ADSC practitioner that I wouldn't have contacted otherwise. Very useful to have practitioner name and contact details."* *"ADSC contact details are helpful – Front Door wouldn't necessarily give us that information"*

Start date of last involvement	Gives social workers an idea of how recent and frequent a family member's involvement is with ADSC.
Date of most recent interaction	
Date current as of	These fields help social workers to trust the data and know whether it is relevant and up-to-date.
Coverage start date and coverage end date	
Coverage geographic area	

Police

Of all 12 services tested, police service involvement was identified as the information that provides the most value to social workers.

Police data means social workers can better assess the risk of harm to the child, as well having an indication of the family context in which they may have been living (e.g. history of domestic abuse). This basic information can help social workers decide whether they need to have a conversation with police, and if it is relevant to do so then that conversation can help them to determine the severity of risk. With more information, social workers can also have better conversations with the family to support them.

Data fields	Justification
Service involvement	Informs social workers if any of the relevant individuals to a case are involved with Police, and if there is a need for further exploration.
Police area	*"Police information is the most important"*
Contact	This information is necessary so that social workers can easily contact and have conversations with the relevant police officers. *"Police - having a contact and email - it would make my life much easier."*
Safeguarding offences (a maximum of 3)	
Date of offence	

Type of offence	Listed safeguarding offences can inform social workers about any direct risks that are posed to children and their families at an earlier point in the assessment process. *"Having the history has made me think straight away there IS an issue; whereas, without it I'll get there less quickly."*
Nature on involvement	*"This level of information is helpful."* *"I don't have access to this information at the minute… often it's a broad, general request for information that I give to the police, so it can take them a long time to find it."* *"Could have a little indicator with date [of] police involvement and then you'd know - ok - well I'll need to go and have a bit more information about that."* There was a preference for even seeing suspect records: *"in some incidents, prosecution doesn't take place, so not always easy to get this information."*
Non-safeguarding offences	
Records found	Showing if an individual has any records for non-safeguarding offences can inform social workers about any indirect risks, which they can choose to explore more with the Police. *"Non-safeguarding offences are less important, but they still inform our assessments"*
Date current as of	These fields help social workers to trust the data and know whether it is relevant and up-to-date.
Coverage start date and coverage end date	
Coverage geographic area	