



# Every Child Matters

## Change For Children

## National eCAF

## Fact Sheet

### Background

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is a key component in the Every Child Matters programme which aims to transform children's services by supporting more effective prevention and early intervention. The aim of the CAF is to provide a standardised approach for practitioners in the holistic assessment of a child's needs and the design of an integrated service to meet those needs. The Government is developing a national eCAF system to ensure that CAF can work to its full potential.

### What is eCAF?

eCAF is the e-enablement of the CAF

- eCAF will allow a practitioner to electronically create, store and share a CAF Form securely.
- eCAF will give authorised, trained practitioners from different sectors secure access to key information concerning the assessment. This will allow them to plan, monitor and review a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of the most appropriate services.

### A national solution

Children often receive services from multiple agencies working across both geographical and organisational borders, thereby increasing the importance of cohesive cross-border working.

After completing a detailed Business Case, it was agreed that a single, national eCAF system, rather than a number of local systems, represented the best option available. It was clear that a national eCAF system would provide the greatest benefits and allow practitioners to securely share information, providing the appropriate consent has been obtained.

### The benefits of a national eCAF system

- Promotes multi-agency working and early interventions
- Facilitates a consistent approach for all practitioners
- Facilitates the effective and efficient delivery of a co-ordinated service
- Creates a holistic view of a child's needs
- Reduces the need for multiple assessments
- Increases the transparency of work performed by other agencies

### Who will have access to the national eCAF system?

Access to the national eCAF system will only be granted to authorised users who have undergone appropriate checks, including those provided by the Criminal Records Bureau.

Practitioners will only be given access to the common assessment information of children they are working with, and only with the informed, explicit consent of the child or young person (or their parent / carer where appropriate).

### What is a CAF Episode?

The CAF Episode is a central concept within the national eCAF system. It corresponds to one complete trip through the CAF business process – from 'Preparation' through to the end of 'Delivery'. It is a self-contained unit that facilitates the collection of information, suitable for sharing between practitioners and systems as required.

Practitioners will be granted access to specific episodes only – there should only be one open CAF Episode per child at any particular time.

The CAF Episode could retain any of the following items: CAF Action Plans, Progress Reviews, Final summary, Consent Statements and the Contact Details of all involved.

### What security measures will be put in place?

Security measures are a fundamental component of the national eCAF system design:

- Access will only be granted to authorised users who have undergone appropriate checks
- Access will also be controlled by two forms of authentication: a password and a one-time code generated by a security token

### In the future, how can I determine whether a CAF exists?

It is the intention that when a common assessment has been logged in the national eCAF system, it will automatically notify ContactPoint that a common assessment has been carried out, along with contact details for the practitioner who completed or updated it. There will be no actual access to the CAF itself via ContactPoint.

### Implementation dates

- Aim to sign a contract with a supplier for a national eCAF system by autumn 2008
- Development and testing of the national system is expected to take approximately a year
- The live national eCAF system will be rolled out to the first organisations in latter half of 2009

### For more information contact:

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