HUB Services
Made Simple

supporting**people**

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HUB Services

BACKGROUND

Hub Services is the co-ordination of all Information Technology and some non-IT projects, which will facilitate the efficient delivery of the *Supporting People* programme.

Hub Services will, for the first time, provide comprehensive information on services and service providers to *Supporting People* professionals and members of the public. This information will be drawn from the existing Administering Authority systems as well as making links to information, currently held by a range of other organisations. It will provide a forum to share best practice and potentially hold sufficient information to benchmark services. It will also provide a system to track clients through services as well as maintain up to date information about costs of services.

WHY IS HUB IMPORTANT?

The lack of co-ordinated information available to practitioners has meant a lot of time is spent matching clients to appropriate services. These matches are not always accurate as they are based on the personal knowledge of the referral agents, as there is no other information available. The Directory will provide information which is easily accessible to all practitioners.

The 'revolving door' syndrome is prevalent in *Supporting People* services. By providing a Service User Information System, providers will be able to retrieve and share information with others as appropriate. As a result, there will be less opportunity for people to fall through the net as the new system will allow us to track users over time.

The SPKweb has been a useful vehicle for disseminating information to stakeholders especially during the implementation of *Supporting People*. The enhancement of the website will appeal to all those involved in *Supporting People*, including the general public.

WHY IS A DIRECTORY OF SERVICES NECESSARY?

The Directory of Services is key to the delivery of *Supporting People*. It will enable easy access to relevant information – mainly on the web, but also through hardcopies where necessary. This will facilitate 'right first time' referrals.

The Directory will be built using existing Local Authority information held in the *Supporting People* Local Systems, purchased by authorities. These systems already have some of the information required for the Directory, although there will be some further 'service rich' information which will need to be added to achieve full value. There will be quarterly data input from the local systems to the Hub Directory, which will be instigated by the local authority. If local authorities feel their information has changed significantly, a monthly update can be submitted. When the Directory receives the update, all sensitive information will be automatically removed.

The Directory will be rolled-out nationally in January 2005, following extensive piloting.

WHAT IS THE SPKWEB AND WHEN WILL IT BE IMPROVED?

The SPKweb is the *Supporting People* Knowledge Website and can be found at www.spkweb.org.uk.

The SPKweb was originally set up for a very specific purpose, to aid the implementation of the *Supporting People* programme. Following the advent of Hub Services, it is now necessary to improve the SPKweb. Current SPKweb users have been consulted on how the website can be improved and their comments have been included in the specification.

The enhanced SPKweb is expected to go live in September 2004.

WHAT IS THE SERVICE USER INFORMATION SYSTEM?

This is a two-pronged system to enable information about service users to be used to provide a better service and to prevent the recurrence of the 'revolving door' syndrome. The Service User Information System will hold some key details of service users to enable them to be tracked between services and ensure that they receive the best possible outcomes from *Supporting People*. The information will also be used to ensure that service users do not have to go through the process of continually providing the same information, thus allowing providers to efficiently engage in providing the right service. It will also enable service providers to make a more accurate risk assessment of the service users before they enter the service or when they require a repeat service.

All this information is highly sensitive, of course, but it will be obtained under the principle of 'informed consent'. Although this may mean that not every user is tracked. The Client Tracking research project has shown that most service users will give their consent when asked.

WHAT ARE THE DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS FOR HUB SERVICES?

There are no Data Protection implications for Directory services, because all sensitive data will be removed.

The SPKweb will have limited Data Protection implications. There will be a new 'log in' facility that will be compulsory before a contributor can join in discussions. This will hold the user's name and email address and will be stored at ODPM. However, it will be used for verification purposes only.

The Service User Information System does have Data Protection implications but, as discussed above, these will be covered by the principle of informed consent.

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