

## Minimum Process Case Study - Leicestershire First Contact Service

### Introduction

The Care Act requires Councils to promote well being to all adults whether they have existing care and support needs or not and highlights the importance of preventing or delaying the development of needs and reducing those needs that already exist.

There are a number of interactions and access points that could act as a trigger point for early intervention and prevention such as: contact with a G.P, Police, and the Voluntary Sector. How are Councils identifying and maximising these contacts? How are Councils extending well being, early intervention and prevention into high priority and socially excluded groups?

The minimum process described below shows how a single checklist at First Contact can reduce duplication between agencies and trigger wide range preventative information, resources and support benefiting the public.

### Background Information

Leicestershire First Contact is a partnership of organisations that work together to bring a range of support to adults who may be perceived as “vulnerable”. The scheme is run by Leicestershire County Council with key partners being District Councils, the police, the fire service and voluntary sector groups.

The First Contact Manager states, *“First Contact is a not about who is eligible for social care, but about who needs information and resources to remain independent and safe in their own home. 95 % of people who use the First Contact service are not known to Adult Social Care”.*

Over the past 4 years the Leicestershire First Contact scheme has been highly successful in stream lining processes and delivering better outcomes for the public by:

- A simple referral process so that one checklist can generate multiple referrals into partner agencies.
- A more stream lined process of referral between First Contact and the Council’s Customer Services Centre
- Integrating First Contact into GP surgeries which is in turn identifying priority and hard to reach members of the public.

### Findings

The First Contact checklist is completed by a partner agency and referred through to the First Contact Team. The checklist covers key areas such as Health and Well being, Income and Finance, Keeping Safe and Secure, but also recognises that people have strengths and assets too. It refers people for a wide range of support including: life line alarms, care and support at home, benefits maximisation, repairs, winter warmth, adult learning, home library, community transport, opportunities to volunteer and contribute, and befriending.

This process greatly reduces the duplication of different agencies making multiple referrals into services and ensures the person is seen holistically.

Case example:

Miss M who is 91 years and living in her own home was a victim of crime when she was subjected to a distraction burglary. A Police Constable from the local policing unit visited her and offered to complete a First Contact checklist. As a result:

- Victim Support installed a PRIDE alarm free of charge
- Age Concern arranged for a handy person service to help manage the overgrown garden
- Adult Social Care staff arranged for help with her mobility to maintain her independence

*“Without the help of all the different agencies which have given her the confidence to remain living in her own home, she feels she would be in a care home. She is so grateful that so many people cared about her and had taken time to help her”* Miss M's niece

### **Integration with Health**

Following a recent pilot, the First Contact checklist has now been fully integrated within the clinical system in all GP surgeries across Leicestershire. A GP can now complete the checklist on screen with a patient if they think they would benefit. The checklist is printed off like a prescription and securely faxed through from the surgery into First Contact. This has had the effect that:

- 27 GP Practices are now actively referring into First Contact.
- Between April - October 2014 one GP alone referred 26 patients into First Contact resulting in 90 referrals being signposted into multiple partner agencies.
- One of the Clinical Commissioning Groups has now included referral into First Contact as a performance measure within its Quality Innovation Productivity and Prevention (QUIPP) programme.

The initiative to integrate the checklist arose as an action from a Blaby District Council report on “Housing offer to Health” and was endorsed by the CCG's. First Contact staff knew they could reach many more people through this access point and this gave them the green light to go ahead in early 2014.

Staff promoted the checklist in GP locality forums and then by invitation attended GP “protected learning time” sessions. They explained the checklist and the resources into which it could refer. While the pilot had positive feedback, GP's reported that the checklist was too long and had too many trigger questions. They required a more streamlined process if they were going to use it and as a result a slimmed down version was developed for their use.

*“First Contact has been a valuable signposting service offering a variety of services to benefit our registered patients. Making referrals is a smooth and straightforward process. ...Patients have benefitted hugely and recent feedback has found that: several patients now have lifelines or other assistive technology; patients have had help to complete benefits forms; provided advice and information about social clubs.”* GP Desford Medical Practice.

### **What is the minimum process?**

One simple checklist can generate a wide range of information and services

The checklist is completed by a member of the partner agencies

It reduces duplication of multiple referrals by different agencies

The checklist deals with consent and data protection and requires this to be completed. The customer has to agree for personal information to be shared

The checklist is completed by a partner agency

The checklist acts as a referral. It is entered into the Councils Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system as a record of contact

An electronic referral(s) is generated and sent to whichever partner agencies are indicated via a secure email. The agencies then contact the customer direct.

Agencies undertake to feedback outcomes to the First Contact Team so as to 'close the loop'.

The checklist has been shortened and integrated into the Clinical system (EMIS System 1) so that GP's can complete on screen with a patient.

The referral process into First Contact from the Council's Customer Services Centre has been streamlined to reduce duplication and for ease of access.

First Contact continues to evaluate the effectiveness of the service provided.

**For more information Contact:**

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[www.leics.gov.uk/firstcontact](http://www.leics.gov.uk/firstcontact)

Appendices:

First Contact Scheme – Starter Pack

First Contact Scheme – GP Checklist