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Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Information sharing relies on being alert to signs of abuse and neglect, an understanding of the legislative framework which underpins information sharing, and how to ensure that information sharing is done appropriately.

Risk always takes precedence; information can be shared without consent if safety is at risk.

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7 golden rules:

- The Data Protection Act is a framework for appropriate information sharing, not a barrier to justify information sharing
- Be open and honest with the individual and/or family
- Seek advice from other practitioners if necessary (without disclosing the individual's identity)
- Share with informed consent. **However, consent can be overridden if there is a risk to safety.**
- Consider safety and well-being
- Abide by the principles of information sharing
- Keeping a record of decisions

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Information sharing is an intrinsic part of any frontline practitioner's job. **Poor information sharing is a consistent issue in serious case reviews and can be caused by fear about sharing information.** It is important therefore that practitioners and managers understand the circumstances in which they can lawfully share information

All practitioners should be alert to signs and triggers of child abuse and neglect, but should also be aware that these may be difficult to spot and may emerge over time.

Professional judgement should be applied, and information should be securely shared.

All organisations should have internal arrangements for information sharing and should be supported by the LSCB

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When to share? A legitimate purpose, individual is identified, the information is confidential and you have Consent; there is good reason to share.

How to share? How much information, distinguish fact from opinion, give the right info to the right person, share securely, inform the individual as long as this doesn't increase risk.

Principles of information sharing;

- Necessary and Proportionate
- Relevant
- Adequate
- Accurate
- Timely
- Secure
- Recorded

The Legislative Framework

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002

Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009

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