

Partner Newsletter

ISSUE 4 2021

New content

The tables below highlight some of the most popular new resources on Community Care Inform. This is just a selection of recent content; for information on other topics or areas you are interested in, you can search the websites, contact your client partner, or the helpdesk on 020 3915 9444 or ccinformhelpdesk@markallengroup.com.

As well as new resources, all material on Community Care Inform is reviewed periodically to take into account changes to legislation and/or research and practice developments. We don't have space here to list each resource but in the past year we have updated content on our knowledge and practice hubs on the

following topics: core skills; dementia; disability; domestic abuse; housing; mental capacity, deprivation of liberty and best interests; mental health; neglect; older people; welfare rights/benefits. You can find these hubs on the blue navigation bar or by a keyword search at the top of the Inform home pages.

New resources that appear on both Inform Children and Inform Adults

Note: links in this list go to the Inform Adults website. For the version on Inform Children, search the title or keywords. All our podcasts are published with written transcripts for those who prefer to read.

Resource	Author or contributor	Key learning
Self-care and Covid 19 (podcast)	Sass Boucher	Ways social workers can look after their wellbeing and create boundaries between work and home.
Creating online reflective spaces when working from home	Siobhan Maclean and Bridget Caffrey	Tips on setting up group online reflection sessions to help practitioners feel more connected and maintain team identity.
Secondary trauma and compassion fatigue	Lori Goosen	How to reduce the negative effects that working with people in distress can have on your personal and professional life.
Remote supervision (podcast)	David Wilkins	Ideas for effective online one-to-one and group supervision that offers emotional support.
Loneliness and isolation during the pandemic (podcast)	Sue Cook	Supporting service users to feel more connected whatever their stage of life.
Domestic abuse and Covid-19: podcast	Donna Covey	How social workers can continue to support vulnerable children and adults during coronavirus restrictions.
Fear and social work (podcast)	Brian Littlechild	How practitioners should be supported to deal with common sources of fear, both during the pandemic and more generally.
Anti-racist social work (podcast)	Kish Bhatti-Sinclair	How anti-racist practice differs from anti-oppressive practice and how social workers and leaders can take action.
Unconscious bias: quick guide	Sneha Khilay	What unconscious bias is, the negative impact it can have on service users and tips on managing biases.

(continued overleaf)



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Resource	Author or contributor	Key learning
Online practice and communication: quick guide to boundaries, ethics and safety	Peter Buzzi	How to ensure safety, privacy and professional boundaries when using different digital platforms, while practising in a relationship-based way.
Domestic abuse: the impact on children and young people	Joanna Sharpen	The ways children of different ages can experience emotional harm, the impact on the mother-child relationship, and effective support.
Working with and supporting parents with learning disabilities	Beth Tarleton and Danielle Turney	Identifying and assessing parents with learning disabilities, plus tips on engaging and communicating with them, and supporting them to learn new skills.
Initial meetings with young people: an intersectional and systemic approach	Jahnine Davis and Nick Marsh	Using these approaches to consider a young person's overlapping lived experience of race, gender, class, sexuality, ability/disability to build relationships.
Community Care Inform Children		
Practising during the pandemic		
Social work during the coronavirus pandemic: resources for practitioners	Community Care Inform	Information and links to resources on Inform and other relevant websites to support work with children and families during the pandemic.
Home and online visits: podcast	Claudia Megele	Considers when it is appropriate to conduct visits online rather than in person, and includes best practice tips.
Case law: Covid-19 and contact with children in care: D-S [2020]	Tim Spencer-Lane	Court of Appeal ruling on how courts should approach decisions about allowing face-to-face contact during coronavirus restrictions, and what information is required from local authorities.
Case law: Covid-19 and rights to a fair trial in care proceedings: C (Children: Covid-19: Representation) [2020]	Tim Spencer-Lane	Addresses issues of fairness in remote or hybrid hearings.
Working with adolescents		
Complex safeguarding: an approach to protecting young people from criminal exploitation	Louise Toye	Explains this approach, developed in Greater Manchester, to safeguard adolescents from extra-familial harm, with tips that can be used by those practising elsewhere and under different models.
Contextual safeguarding: key considerations for applying the approach	Carlene Firmin	How and why the contextual safeguarding approach was developed, how it has been applied to date and how individuals, teams and organisations might use it.
Safeguarding adolescents: a needs-led approach	James Houghton	How to develop systemic, holistic, needs-led approaches to address adolescent risk and vulnerability and use relationship-based interventions.
Trauma		
ADHD or trauma: working with the potential for misdiagnosis	Laura Hanbury	Explores the overlap in presentation between ADHD and children who have experienced trauma to help social workers be alert to misunderstood behaviour.
Adverse childhood experiences	Sue Penna	Looks at the purpose of the original study of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and how ACEs can be used in social work today, as well as some of the risks of this approach.
Guide to trauma and a trauma-informed approach	Sue Penna	Explores the key principles that underpin a trauma-informed approach and how to bring this into practice to build trusting relationships with children and adults. Plus, how organisations can deliver a trauma-informed service, focused on safety and empowerment.
Children in care		
Placement disruption: quick guide	Philip Heslop	How to reduce the risk of instability at the planning stage, as well as suggestions for resolving problems during placements and supporting children and carers if a placement does break down.
Siblings, placements and contact: podcast	Shelagh Beckett	Ways to support individual children's needs in relation to their siblings when they first come into care and during permanence planning, and deal with challenging situations.
Placement choice and decisions for looked-after children	Philip Heslop	Guide to different placement options, their legal standing and good practice considerations in decision making.
Other		
Safeguarding children and young people online	Peter Buzzi and Claudia Megele	Provides a comprehensive framework ('the 10 Cs') for understanding online risks, harm and resilience as part of holistic assessments.
Social work evidence template (SWET): completed example	David Wilkins	An example evidence template (SWET) to support social workers completing the form and presenting their analysis to court.
Brexit: nationality, asylum and local authorities' responsibilities	Children and Families Across Borders	A guide to the impact of Brexit on citizenship, particularly local authorities' duties to support EU children to apply for settled status before 30 June 2021.
How Brexit affects cross-border care proceedings	Children and Families Across Borders	Explains the post-Brexit legal framework for care proceedings involving children with EU connections.

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Resource	Author or contributor	Key learning
Practising during the pandemic		
Social work during the coronavirus pandemic: resources for practitioners	Community Care Inform	Information and links to resources on Inform and other relevant websites to support work with adults during the pandemic.
Testing for Covid-19 and mental capacity: quick guide	Tim Spencer-Lane	Guidance on the legal position when someone lacks the mental capacity to consent to a Covid-19 test or has capacity but refuses to be tested.
Case law: Covid-19 vaccination and best interests: E (Vaccine) [2021]	Tim Spencer-Lane	Summary and practice points from the first reported court judgment on capacity and best interests in relation to the Covid-19 vaccines.
Case law: Best interests, the Covid-19 vaccine and family objections: SD v Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea [2021]	Tim Spencer-Lane	Court of Protection ruling addressing situations where care home residents cannot consent to a vaccine and their family do not wish them to have it.
Case law: Remote assessments and the Mental Health Act: Devon Partnership NHS Trust v Secretary of State for Health and Social Care [2021]	Tim Spencer-Lane	This judgment found that the Mental Health Act requires patients to be seen in person for assessments and that detentions based on remote assessments are likely to be unlawful.
Mental capacity		
Assessing capacity to make residence decisions	Tim Spencer-Lane	Looks at the relevant and irrelevant information when it comes to capacity to make residence decisions and its relationship to care and treatment decisions.
Medical treatment: when is an application to the Court of Protection needed?	Tim Spencer-Lane	Explains when a court application must be considered if someone lacking capacity needs medical treatment.
Capacity to consent to sexual relations and capacity to engage in sexual activity: A Local Authority v JB [2020]	Tim Spencer-Lane	Key points from a Court of Appeal ruling that overturned aspects of previous case law in relation to capacity to consent to sexual activity.
Case law: capacity, alcohol misuse and unwise decisions: London Borough of Tower Hamlets v PB [2020]	Tim Spencer-Lane	Explains why the court disagreed with a psychiatrist's view about whether a man with alcohol-related brain damage had the capacity to decide to continue drinking when that would be extremely risky for his health.
Case law: Expert evidence in the Court of Protection: AMDC v AG [2020]	Tim Spencer-Lane	Sets out what this ruling found practitioners should, and should not, do when completing court reports.
Mental health		
Section 117 – the new approach to ordinary residence: quick guide	Tim Spencer-Lane	Explains five controversial decisions by the Department of Health and Social Care and the implications for local authorities.
Learning disability and mental health problems: quick guide	Gillian MacIntyre	The reasons why adults with learning disabilities are more likely to experience mental health problems, the signs to look out for and practice tips for assessment.
Management		
Supervision: building high quality relationships	Lee-Ann Fenge	Advice on creating a safe space, developing a contract for the supervisory relationship and offering emotional support.
Supervision: skills assessment, observation and feedback	Siobhan Maclean	How to assess different types of development and skills, and provide constructive feedback.
Other		
Adults with learning disabilities and intimate relationships	Claire Bates	Looks at how social workers can support adults with learning disabilities to have intimate relationships, including what the law says, and tips on talking to parents.
Using trauma-informed approaches when working with adults	Lydia Guthrie	Outlines the different types of trauma and their physical, emotional, cognitive and behavioural effects, as well how to put a trauma-informed approach into practice.

Learning by email: newsletter courses

February saw the launch of an exciting new learning opportunity for Inform users: our first email online learning course.

We chose domestic abuse as the topic for our pilot course because the issue has become an increasing concern during the coronavirus pandemic. The aim of the course was to refresh and increase knowledge about the essential aspects of the social work role in relation to domestic abuse, based on guides and resources on Community Care Inform.

It was delivered over three weeks via email newsletters. After signing up, Inform users

received two lessons a week and each lesson took about 10-15 minutes to read.

The course covered:

- the basics about domestic abuse;
- the impact of domestic abuse on children;
- practice scenarios;
- the toxic trio;
- coercive and controlling behaviour;
- using the Dash risk checklist.

Lessons started with a quick recap of what was learnt last time, followed by an introduction, key points from the guide and practice tips. All lessons ended with

an activity – typically an issue to reflect on or discuss with colleagues. After finishing the final lesson, participants were able to request a CPD certificate to evidence their completion of the course.

The course is still open, so any Inform users who haven't had a chance to complete it can still sign up. Regardless of when they sign up, they will be delivered the course over three weeks.

We're now in the process of analysing the results from the course and the feedback survey. We will use these to determine whether there is an appetite for more courses, and if so, what topics they should cover.

A relationship-based approach to online direct work: webinar

As we go to press, CC Inform Children is getting ready to host a webinar on virtual direct work with Dr Peter Buzzi, an expert in relationship-based practice online. The live webinar is taking place on 24 March for an audience from organisations with a premium partner licence for CC Inform.

A recording will be available after the event for all licence holders so if staff weren't able to attend, keep an eye on the CC Inform Children homepage and the email newsletter for a video recording of the session. As well as practitioners being able to watch the recording individually whenever it suits them, managers have told us that watching webinars as a team and reflecting together can be a valuable learning experience.

The webinar will examine some of the principles of online working, as well as offering practice examples of creating greater impact and building relationships in virtual visits. It will look at communicating effectively in different situations and to meet specific needs, including ensuring the work is developmentally appropriate. It will explore ideas such as 'social presence' and 'digilanguage' to help practitioners use their relational skills online.

There will be a Q & A section at the end of the live webinar for Peter to address questions from practitioners at premium partner organisations attending. This will form part of the recording, which will be available on CC Inform for as long as its practice messages are up-to-date and relevant.

Dr Peter Buzzi focuses on trauma-informed relational and digital practice. He worked with Social Work England and the Principal



Children and Families Social Worker Network on guidance for practice during the pandemic. He is currently leading a largescale research and practice development project involving a number of local authorities and national organisations in England.

We're looking forward to running more

webinars on both CC Inform Children and Adults in future and are asking social workers to let us know what topics they'd like to see covered.

- If you have any feedback, please contact ccinformhelpdesk@markallengroup.com

Awareness days: April-June 2021

We have been given feedback that it is helpful to see a plan of all the 'awareness days' across the year to help you plan your learning and development programme. For the full year programme of awareness days, please visit: https://markallenassets.blob.core.windows.net/ccinform/2021/03/Calendar-of-Awareness-Days-2021_A4.pdf

DATES	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	LINK
APRIL			
1.4.21 – 30.4.21 Whole month	Stress Awareness Month	<p>Stress Awareness Month has been held every April since 1992 to increase public awareness about both the causes and cures for our modern stress epidemic. Despite this running for 28 years we have got a long way to go. According to the Mental Health Foundation 74% of UK adults have felt so stressed at some point over the last year they felt overwhelmed or unable to cope.</p> <p>Millions of us around the UK are experiencing high levels of stress and it is damaging our health. Stress is one of the great public health challenges of our time, but it still isn't being taken as seriously as physical health concerns. Stress is a significant factor in mental health problems including anxiety and depression. It is also linked to physical health problems like heart disease, problems with our immune system, insomnia and digestive problems. Individually we need to understand what is causing us personal stress and learn what steps we can take to reduce it for ourselves and those around us.</p>	https://www.awarenessdays.com/awareness-days-calendar/stress-awareness-month-2021/#:~:text=April%20%20April%2030,for%20our%20modern%20stress%20epidemic
2.4.21	World Autism Awareness Day	<p>On World Autism Awareness Day, we recognise and celebrate the rights of people with autism. This year's observance takes place in the midst of a public health crisis unlike any other in our lifetimes – a crisis that places people with autism at disproportionate risk as a result of the coronavirus and its impact on society.</p>	https://www.un.org/en/observances/autism-day
7.4.21	World Health Day	<p>April 7 of each year marks the celebration of World Health Day. From its inception at the First Health Assembly in 1948 and since taking effect in 1950, the celebration has aimed to create awareness of a specific health theme to highlight a priority area of concern for the World Health Organization.</p> <p>Over the past 50 years this has brought to light important health issues such as mental health, maternal and child care, and climate change. The celebration is marked by activities which extend beyond the day itself and serves as an opportunity to focus worldwide attention on these important aspects of global health.</p>	https://www.who.int/westernpacific/news/events/world-health-day
MAY			
1.5.21 – 31.5.21 Whole month	National Stroke Awareness month/ Make May Purple	<p>Make May Purple is our Stroke Association fundraising and awareness campaign that coincides with National Stroke Awareness month – May.</p> <p>The Coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis is a difficult and worrying time for everyone. It suddenly turned our lives upside down and has affected people emotionally. We know isolation can be especially difficult for stroke survivors and their families, so we want to help in a small way if we can.</p> <p>As you're aware, this is usually the time we ask everyone to Make May Purple for stroke and get together to host activities and show support for stroke survivors. Some of you might have had to cancel your Make May Purple activities, so we wanted to offer some ways of helping you connect with us and the wider stroke community during this unprecedented time.</p>	https://www.stroke.org.uk/fundraising/make-may-purple

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DATES	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	LINK
MAY			
4.5.21 – 10.5.21	Deaf Awareness Week	<p>Deaf Awareness Week aims to raise awareness and challenge perceptions of hearing loss and deafness across the UK.</p> <p>Deaf awareness week is all about promoting the positive aspects of living with deafness.</p> <p>This aims to raise awareness of the isolation that deaf people can sometimes experience, and promote the importance of social inclusion.</p>	https://www.deafcouncil.org.uk/deaf-awareness-week/
14.5.21 – 18.5.21	BNF Healthy Eating Week	<p>BNF Healthy Eating Week is a dedicated week in the year to encourage organisations across the UK (including workplaces, universities, and schools) to focus on healthy eating and drinking, and physical activity, and celebrate healthy living.</p>	https://www.nutrition.org.uk/healthyliving/hew.html
17.05.21 – 23.05.21	Dementia Action Week	<p>Dementia Action Week is a national event that sees the UK public taking action to improve the lives of people affected by dementia.</p>	https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/get-involved/dementia-action-week
10.5.21 – 23.5.21	Foster Care Fortnight	<p>Foster Care Fortnight™ is the UK's biggest foster care awareness raising campaign, delivered by leading fostering charity, The Fostering Network. Established in 1997, the campaign showcases the commitment, passion and dedication of foster carers. It also supports fostering services to highlight fostering in their local area and the fantastically positive impact fostering is making to the lives of children and young people, including sibling groups, those with disabilities and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.</p> <p>Foster Care Fortnight receives hundreds of pieces of media coverage each year, and The Fostering Network is delighted to receive the backing of celebrities and politicians from across the UK who lend their support to our campaign.</p>	https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk/get-involved/foster-care-fortnight
15.5.21	International Day of Families	<p>This year's 25th anniversary of Copenhagen Declaration and Beijing Platform for Action comes at a time of one of the most challenging global health and social crises. The 2020 Covid-19 pandemic brings into sharp focus the importance of investing in social policies protecting the most vulnerable individuals and families. It is the families who bear the brunt of the crisis, sheltering their members from harm, caring for out-of-school children and, at the same time, continuing their work responsibilities.</p> <p>Families have become the hub of intergenerational interactions that support us in this crisis. Under economic duress poverty deepens. In times of uncertainty stress increases – often resulting in growing violence against women and children. That is why the support for vulnerable families – those who have lost their income, those in inadequate housing, those with young children, older people and people with disabilities – is imperative now more than ever.</p> <p>The International Day of Families is observed on the 15th May every year. Activities include workshops and conferences, radio and television programmes, newspaper articles and cultural programmes highlighting relevant themes.</p>	https://www.un.org/en/observances/international-day-of-families

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MAY			
10.5.21 – 16.5.21	Mental Health Awareness Week	<p>We have chosen 'Nature and the environment' as the theme for Mental Health Awareness Week 10-16 May 2021!</p> <p>The evidence is clear that access to nature is crucial for our mental health and millions of people re-discovered that during lockdowns this year. However, this was not the same for all of us. We want to explore what the barriers are and ensure everyone is able to share in the natural world and experience the mental health benefits.</p> <p>The week will be an opportunity to open our eyes to the power of nature.</p>	https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week
17.5.21 – 23.5.21	Learning at Work Week	<p>Learning at Work Week's theme for 2021 is Made for Learning. Join us to celebrate lifelong learning at work and build learning cultures everywhere!</p>	https://www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk/pages/news/category/learning-at-work-week
JUNE			
1.6.21 – 6.6.21	Child Safety Week	<p>In response to Covid-19, we're changing what we do this year, to meet the changing needs of families and the frontline staff who support them:</p> <p>We've adapted the Child Safety Week Parents' Pack, so it helps parents take on child safety and win, even when they're feeling under pressure.</p> <p>We've created new content that practitioners can use right now in their digital communications, however they're reaching out to families. This includes our top tips for child safety during lockdown and beyond, plus advice on preventing burns and poisoning.</p> <p>We're reworking the Child Safety Week Action Pack as a year-round resource, so practitioners can use it in face-to-face work with families as lockdown eases.</p> <p>During Child Safety Week itself, our emphasis will be on social media, to reach as many families as possible.</p>	https://www.capt.org.uk/Pages/Category/child-safety-week
1.6.21 – 7.6.21	Volunteers Week	<p>Volunteers Week is a week in which the UK celebrates volunteers and says thank you to them for the contribution that they make. The week also raises awareness about the benefits of becoming a volunteer and the diverse volunteering roles that are available.</p>	https://volunteersweek.org/
8.6.21 – 14.6.21	Carers Week	<p>Carers Week is an annual campaign to raise awareness of caring, highlight the challenges unpaid carers face and recognise the contribution they make to families and communities throughout the UK. It also helps people who don't think of themselves as having caring responsibilities to identify as carers and access much-needed support. The campaign is brought to life by thousands of individuals and organisations who come together to provide support for carers, run activities and highlight the vital role carers play in our communities, drawing attention to just how important caring is.</p>	https://www.carersweek.org/
14.6.21	World Blood Donor Day	<p>Every year, on 14 June, countries around the world celebrate World Blood Donor Day (WBDD).</p> <p>The event serves to raise awareness of the need for safe blood and blood products and to thank blood donors for their life-saving gifts of blood.</p>	https://www.who.int/news-room/campaigns/world-blood-donor-day

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JUNE			
14.6.21 – 20.6.21	Nutrition and Hydration Week	Nutrition and Hydration Week is an annual event with a shared objective to highlight, promote, and celebrate improvements in the provision of nutrition and hydration locally, nationally, and globally.	https://nutritionandhydrationweek.co.uk/
14.6.21 – 20.6.21	Men's Health Week	You'll have surely guessed the theme for Men's Health Week 2020. It was 'Take Action on Covid-19'. This year, we'll be looking at what we can all do to prevent the virus doing more damage.	https://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/mhw #menshealthweek
15.6.21 – 20.6.21	Learning Disability Week	<p>Due to the coronavirus pandemic, we have all been living in lockdown. This means that many people with a learning disability are feeling isolated, as they have been unable to see their friends and families.</p> <p>We know that people with a learning disability already experience high levels of loneliness and social isolation and that this will only have been made worse by the lockdown.</p> <p>We want to show the importance of friendships to help with tackling isolation, as well as exploring the different ways of maintaining friendships during this unusual time.</p>	https://www.mencap.org.uk/get-involved/learning-disability-week-2020
15.6.21	World Elder Abuse Awareness Day	The World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) happens each year on June 15. It was officially recognised by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 66/127, December 2011, following a request by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA), which first established the commemoration in June 2006. It represents the one day in the year when the whole world voices its opposition to the abuse and suffering inflicted to some of our older generations.	https://www.un.org/development/desa/ageing/world-elder-abuse-awareness-day.html

How we developed a learning culture – case study 1

‘We worked closely with CC Inform to develop training events and make relevant resources easily accessible’

Lynne Beevers, principal social worker and service lead for adults, Middlesbrough

After a restructure of its access and safeguarding teams and recommendations from a local Learning Lessons Review, Middlesbrough decided it needed to provide staff with additional training and guidance on domestic abuse and alcohol dependency. Lynne worked with CC Inform’s senior client partner Rebekkah Tabern to plan training sessions and make the best use of Middlesbrough’s personalised page on CC Inform.

“The ‘Adult C’ learning review following the death of a 30-year-old woman with complex vulnerabilities had identified that while there was a lot of knowledge about domestic violence within the council, especially around commissioned services, this was not always shared with social work staff. There were misconceptions about the role and remit of multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs) and long-term coordination – a sense that working with victims of domestic abuse was ‘specialist’ and that once clients had been referred to MARAC or specific services, the social work role was finished.

Myself and Claire Moore, our domestic abuse and sexual violence lead, discussed how to raise awareness and cascade information to help our social workers work more effectively and

protect vulnerable adults. I’d had very positive experiences of working with CC Inform previously, and felt they would be ideal to help train staff and provide accessible resources.

Claire and I worked closely with Rebekah and Aisling from CC Inform to develop and present a series of six hour long online sessions. The sessions explored Adult C’s case and how the learning identified linked to social workers’ roles. We also wanted staff to leave with a good understanding of the resources and services available in Middlesbrough, and relevant information on CC Inform. We used our personalised page on CC Inform to complement this – we highlighted issues around domestic abuse and alcohol dependency and linked directly to useful research and guidance on CC Inform, as well as local services that practitioners could access for their clients.

For me, this was key to making those sessions part of a wider learning culture – everything is in one place and readily accessible for staff to refer to at any time, including those who were unable to attend



the sessions. It also raises awareness of these issues each time staff visit CC Inform as it’s the first page they see.

Feedback following the sessions was very positive. 100% felt they helped them to explore how this learning relates to their role with vulnerable adults and 60% had already read the information on CC Inform. Comments included that the page ‘validated discussions and offered more links to look for support’ and ‘is a really useful learning tool’.

I would definitely recommend working with CC Inform on similar projects in the future.”

Coming soon... our 30 day learning challenge!

We are launching a new pilot and are looking for partners to join us on this journey as we create a proof-of-concept case study.

We have been looking at research into habit formation and how this can link with a positive learning culture. Our new initiative will deliver bite-sized learning of around 10 minutes every morning to participants’ inboxes over a 30 day or six week period.



For more information about getting involved in the pilot, please contact sarah.bramley@markallengroup.com

CommunityCare
inform

How we developed a learning culture – case study 2



Nottinghamshire County Council

**‘You’ve got to be proactive about getting staff into new learning habits – that’s a two-way process with us and CC Inform’
Liz Maslen, children’s workforce development manager, Nottinghamshire County Council**

Historically, Nottinghamshire had been using CC Inform in an ad hoc way, mainly amongst its frontline social workers. But in January 2018, they decided they wanted to embed a learning culture across all their frontline services. A key element of this, interwoven into their training plan and communications from leaders to staff, was investing in a workforce licence. This provided access to CC Inform to youth services, early years, family support and disability services, as well as children’s social care.

“It’s a really broad and diverse workforce of over 1,000 people, with a wide range of skills. It was a big ask to pull all these services together into one learning culture; we needed to have a robust engagement plan.

Our staff are busy – they are very focused on the day job and the stresses that can bring. We needed to think: how do we ‘sell’ this, how do we get in there between all the other important stuff and make it equally important for them to engage with learning? The key things that have helped us are:

‘Drivers’: I compare this to giving my one-year-old granddaughter a present. She doesn’t yet recognise what to do with it – you have

to unwrap it for her, show her how to play with it. Similarly, you can’t just buy a CC Inform licence and expect workers to use it – you’ve got to show them what’s there. ‘Drivers’ helped us do that. We started at the top – getting our service directors, group managers, and service managers on board first so they could encourage frontline managers to use this with their teams more fully. We’re now seeing the results of more frontline staff wanting access for themselves, increasingly valuing and paying attention to it.

Communications: A learning culture needs rolling, ongoing engagement. Our PSW does a weekly update on training and new research. That always includes links to relevant CC Inform resources, as does the weekly Covid update from our service director and our monthly ‘Team Talk’.

Support from CC Inform: It’s a two-way process – our role is to think about what staff need based on internal audits, feedback, current events and so on. The CC Inform team provide manager briefing sessions that gear managers up to get staff engaged with learning, content ‘mapping’ (listing links to resources that meet the learning needs we’ve identified), emails

showing staff new and popular resources, plus our Nottinghamshire personalised page on CC Inform where staff can see particular content and themes we want to highlight. We also have regular meetings with CC Inform, to discuss what’s happening at our end and new developments they’ve got brewing.

Staff especially like the quick reads they can fit into their busy day, podcasts, group learning that helps managers facilitate sessions with teams, and supported learning quizzes that identify where they might be a bit rusty and direct them to content to help address that knowledge gap.

It was a significant investment for the council to get a workforce licence but thinking about the cost per head and everything we have access to throughout the year, compared to the costs of traditional training, we think it’s good value. In the last 12 months, given the way we’ve been working and delivering training, it’s been a huge help. The usage data is really encouraging, showing us that our staff are making regular use of it, even during the pandemic. We expect this to increase as we move out of lockdown and make plans to use it in different, service-specific ways.”

Community Care Insight events

We hosted our first Insight event of the year on 25 February.

Thank you to everyone that was able to come along. It was great to see so many of you there and we hope you found it useful. Our events are for our partner councils to share best practice and the latest research around building a positive learning culture. Thank you to Liz Maslen (Nottinghamshire County Council), Lori Goossen (Medway Council) and Lynn Beevers (Middlesbrough Council) for sharing such helpful and inspiring case studies on the brilliant projects you and your teams are working on.

Details of our next Insight event will be coming soon. Please let your client partner know if you would like to get involved in any way and if you have any feedback on these events.

Many thanks, The Community Care Inform Team



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Meet the Community Care Inform team

Meet the Inform partnerships team who are here to help maximise the impact of Inform on your organisation and support you in delivering your social work learning and development strategies. You can contact the team on the numbers below and also engage with them on Twitter.




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Our customer success team are available to answer all your queries about using Community Care Inform and help you and your practitioners find what you need. Contact them at:
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