

The Purpose of CHAIN

CHAIN (Combined Homelessness And Information Network) is an Internet based information system containing details of the street population of London and the services they access. The purpose of CHAIN is to enable organisations working with this client group to work more effectively, through access to up-to-date information about individuals from the point at which they are contacted by an outreach team, through the system of services, to the outcomes that they reach. CHAIN provides information on this client group and the extent to which current services are able to assist them, in order that more effective work can be achieved with this group in the future. It also provides up-to-date management information for the Homelessness and Housing Support Directorate and Local Authorities, and statistical information for planning future services.

Outreach managers and workers have access to CHAIN to enhance and support their work with the street population. They have responsibility for providing the system with information on clients using the streets, actions that are completed with these clients, services/projects that clients access or are booked in to, and obtaining consent from clients for their information to be put on CHAIN.

Appropriate use of CHAIN data

Outreach managers must ensure the security of the system. CHAIN must be used responsibly and appropriately, in the knowledge that it contains sensitive personal information which should remain confidential to users of CHAIN. Ensuring security of the system will mean that users comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and adhere to Caldicott standards. All organisations using CHAIN should be registered with the Information Commissioner as Data Controllers.

For further information see: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

1. Access to and use of CHAIN information

- All access to CHAIN is password protected.
- User names are issued by Broadway to individual named staff.
- Under no circumstances should a password be revealed to, or shared with any other person.
- Passwords must be changed at least every 90 days otherwise access to CHAIN will be denied.
- If a staff member changes role or leaves their position and so no longer requires access to CHAIN, outreach managers must deactivate users immediately.
- CHAIN must only be used to access or input data relating to clients with whom outreach workers have had contact, or to produce relevant reports.
- Any information seen, downloaded or printed from CHAIN must be kept confidential and accessible to system users only. Statistical information can be shared internally within a user's organisation for management and planning purposes. Individual client information can be shared with other agencies as appropriate in order to advance services to the client, but CHAIN information must not be made available to any other agencies or persons without prior consultation with Broadway.
- Downloaded data should be deleted from any computer on which it is held, or be securely saved using a password.
- All information recorded should be factual, current, and relevant to the purposes of CHAIN.

2. Client involvement

- Outreach teams must make information on CHAIN available to clients if requested.
- Clients may view, or have a printed copy of information held about them, but not any other individual, on request. All requests to view information must be passed to the CHAIN Team at Broadway. The CHAIN Team will then arrange, within 40 days, to send printed information for viewing at the outreach team's office, or for the client to view the information on a computer screen at Broadway's central office if more appropriate.
- Outreach teams must use the forms provided by the CHAIN Team at Broadway for recording if a client requests: not to be placed on CHAIN, to view their details on CHAIN, or to be removed from CHAIN. Copies of any completed forms must be sent to the CHAIN Team at Broadway.
- As most client data contained on CHAIN is classed as 'sensitive personal data' under the Data Protection Act 1998, clients should be told that information about them will be held on CHAIN and will be seen by other agencies responsible for providing services to them who use the system. Unless clients are covered by Statutory Instrument (SI) 417 or other grounds (specified in the CHAIN Data Protection Guidance Notes) they should be asked to consent to their information being held. Where it is appropriate to obtain consent this should be gained prior to entering client information onto CHAIN wherever practical. When consent cannot be obtained before data is added to CHAIN, ongoing efforts must be made towards getting this as soon as possible afterwards. When consent has been gained, or it is decided that use of the SI is appropriate, this must be recorded via the relevant actions on CHAIN.
- It is the responsibility of outreach teams to maximise levels of consent, or to decide that the SI covers a client. Outreach teams must work towards gaining consent in all cases where they are working with clients for whom consent is outstanding and the SI or other grounds of exemption do not apply.

3. Keeping CHAIN information accurate and up-to-date

- Outreach teams are responsible for ensuring that all client data is complete and up-to-date.
- Once trained and online, outreach teams are responsible for setting up records for new clients wherever possible within 48 hours of meeting them.
- Outreach teams are responsible for inputting daily actions and outcomes - within 48 hours of the event occurring - wherever possible.
- Where Broadway becomes aware that information is not up-to-date, there will be liaison with organisations concerned to solve problems quickly.
- In completing all of the above, outreach teams must ensure that all relevant information fields are fully and accurately completed, and that duplicate client records are not created. If duplicate clients are made or found, the CHAIN Team at Broadway must be informed in order to rectify the problem. If erroneous actions are made or found, outreach teams should delete or correct them.
- Broadway will train, advise and support outreach teams in using CHAIN and carrying out their CHAIN responsibilities.
- Outreach managers can produce reports from CHAIN to assist them in working effectively. The CHAIN Team at Broadway can provide support and advice in obtaining information from CHAIN.

Signed to confirm agreement (please print name and sign):

Name:

Position:

Project/Organisation:

Signature:

Date: