

AUDIT REPORT 23'012
SOCIAL CARE & CAREFIRST SYSTEM
INFORMATION GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Executive Summary

The annual internal audit plan for 2022/23 provides for a review of the CareFirst system and the various databases used for recording service user information. CareFirst is the primary database that records and manages social care cases for Adult, Children and Families Services. CareFirst is a long standing widely used application within the public sector for recording social care data. Most service user data is available on CareFirst, but some information is saved separately either on a council IT server or in paper files due to the lack of a facility within CareFirst to attach documents and the continued requirement to hold some information in hard copy for legal reasons.

The audit reviewed access controls around the management of case files. This included consideration of who can view, add, amend or delete information, recognising that restricted access has to be balanced with a need for prompt availability of information for those employees who require it to deliver services effectively. Controls in this area are particularly important due to the sensitive nature of much of the information. In addition, the Council has duties under data protection regulations, and breaches of these regulations can result in censure and substantial financial penalties being levied by the Information Commissioner's Office.

The audit also considered the findings from a review of the CareFirst System that was undertaken within the 2017/18 Audit Plan and a check undertaken to evidence the implementation of these recommendations.

The audit was carried out in accordance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).

It is appreciated that due to the pandemic, officers have been focused on supporting service users for the last few years to ensure that essential care continues to be delivered. The review has highlighted the following areas for consideration:-

- Information concerning a service user care package is recorded on multiple databases, i.e., CareFirst, shared drive and paper files. Evaluation should be undertaken with improving technology, if it is feasible to strengthen case recording procedures such that all data ultimately can be recorded in a single file for each service user.
- Case recording procedures have been developed, however it was noted they had not been reviewed for several years. In addition, with the imminent transfer of Children and Families Services to the Moray Integration Joint Board, there is an opportunity to review working practices and develop uniform procedures for recording information and reviewing case files.

- The audit reviewed who can view, add, amend or delete information from the various databases used for recording service user information. Different access controls were found between the CareFirst system, Council IT server and paper files. Consideration should be given to reviewing access controls for these various databases to ensure consistency in operating arrangements and that officers can only access information required to undertake duties of their post.

Recommendations

Risk Ratings for Recommendations						
High	Key controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved. Urgent attention required.	Medium	Less critically important controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.		Low	Lower level controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.
No.	Audit Recommendation	Priority	Accepted (Yes/ No)	Comments	Responsible Officer	Timescale for Implementation
Key Control: Effective Information control systems in operation to protect and secure access to social care data.						
5.01	Investigation should be undertaken to explore the possibilities of developing a single case recording system.	Medium	Yes	This is a key requirement for the replacement of CareFirst System. The CareFirst Replacement Board was suspended at the beginning of the pandemic. Health & Social Care Moray are currently developing a prioritised delivery plan for our Strategic Plan,	Commissioning Manager	The delivery plan for Health & Social Care Moray's Strategic Plan, incorporating the proposed timetable for replacement of the CareFirst, is scheduled to be put before the IJB by 30 November 2022.

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				Partners In Care. The prioritisation of the replacement of CareFirst will be part of this process.		
5.02	Additional access controls to the CareFirst System should be introduced to include time limited access and more complex password combination requirements.	Medium	Yes	Time limited access will be introduced. It is not possible to introduce more complex password combinations on CareFirst but this will be a requirement for the replacement of CareFirst.	Information Systems Officer	31 October 2022
5.03	A review of access rights to CareFirst, Shared Drive and Paper Files should be undertaken with the purpose that officers should only be authorised to view case file information required to undertake their duties.	Medium	Yes	Agreed. Implementation will be depended on the replacement to the CareFirst System.	Commissioning Manager	The delivery plan for Health & Social Care Moray's Strategic Plan, incorporating the proposed timetable for replacement of

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						the CareFirst, is scheduled to be put before the IJB by 30 November 2022.
5.04	<p>An officer should record a clear description within the CareFirst System to explain why access is required to a Restricted Case File.</p> <p>Where restricted service user records are also held within the shared drive and paper records, a clear description should also be maintained detailing reasons for access.</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>A review of the management reports where access is required to a restricted case file will be undertaken to ensure the reason for access is clearly recorded. A report from the review will be considered by the Practice Governance Board.</p>	<p>Commissioning Manager/ Information Systems Officer</p> <p>Commissioning Manager/ Information Systems Officer</p>	<p>31 December 2022</p> <p>31 December 2022</p>
5.05	CareFirst Case Files should be deleted in accordance with the Council Document Retention Policy. Deletion of case files should only be actioned after the authority of a senior manager is obtained.	Medium	Yes	Implementation arrangements will be reviewed and agreed by the Practice Governance Board.	Commissioning Manager/ Information Systems Officer	31 December 2022

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5.06	The deletion of CareFirst System files should also include information held regarding a service user within the shared drive and paper files.	Medium	Yes	Implementation arrangements will be reviewed and agreed by the Practice Governance Board.	Commissioning Manager	31 December 2022
5.07	The re-introduction of regular reviews of case files should be undertaken by Managers within Adult, Children and Families Services.	Medium	Yes	Regular reviews of case files will be undertaken by managers.	Head of Community Care/ Head Children & Families & Criminal Justice	31 October 2022
5.08	Case recording procedures should be updated for Adult, Children and Families Services.	Medium	Yes	Adult Services have reviewed the Case Recording Procedure and are developing a complementary Records Management Procedure. The revised Case Recording Procedure is currently at final draft stage.	Commissioning Manager	31 December 2022

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				Children and Families Services are also intending to update their Case Recording Procedure.	Quality Improvement & Policy Manager	31 January 2023
5.09	A review should be undertaken of the security of paper records held within the Community Care Finance Offices to ensure service user information can only be viewed by authorised officers.	Medium	Yes	This has recently taken place, a number of actions from the review have been completed. New office equipment is currently being purchased e.g. new lockable filing cabinets and the Community Care Finance Officer is liaising with Health & Safety Section with a view to identifying any further security measures for both the office	Community Care Finance Officer	Completed

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