

## APPENDIX 2

### Information Sharing Protocols – producing guidance for practitioners

The purpose of an information sharing protocol (ISP) is to provide a framework for information sharing between agencies. While it is helpful for the full ISP to set out in detail such matters as the legal background and justification for the information sharing, the guidance document should keep things simple. It should give practitioners the information they need to make everyday decisions about whether to share information.

The table below indicates what topics should be addressed in the guidance document and provides suggestions for content.

Topics to address	Suggested content
Why have an ISP	An Information Sharing Protocol (ISP) is a signed agreement between two or more organisations relating to a specified information sharing activity. An ISP explains the terms under which the organisations have agreed to share information and the practical steps that need to be taken to ensure compliance with those terms. This guide is aimed at practitioners and summarises how information can be shared within the terms of the [insert protocol name] ISP.
What agencies are parties to the protocol	List all the parties to the protocol.
What information sharing activities are covered by this ISP	Set out the situations that this ISP applies to. It is helpful to refer to the drivers behind the development of the ISP, but practical specific examples of the type of exchange it applies to should be set out.
How to request information from one of the parties to this protocol	<p>Most ISPs contain a form that has been specifically developed for agencies to use when requesting information. The guidance should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Give details of where to obtain the form</li><li>• Include a copy</li></ul> <p>Whether or not there is a form, the guidance should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State where to direct the request</li><li>• State how to communicate the request (the ISP may specify by what means the information should be shared)</li></ul>
How to provide information to	Some ISPs contain a separate form for the agency providing the information to use. Where there is one, this should be

one to the parties to this protocol	included as above. Where the ISP specifies by what means the information should be shared, this should be included in the guidance.
Some things to think about before providing the information	It may be helpful to include a checklist such as this in the guidance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How much information it is relevant/necessary to share</li> <li>▪ Is the information fact or opinion (it should be clear to the requester)</li> <li>▪ Whether the information is going to the right person</li> <li>▪ Transferring the information securely</li> </ul>
Make a record of the information sharing	Some ISPs contain a form to use to record details of the information sharing. Where there is one, this should be referred to, as with the forms mentioned above. Where there is no specific form, the guidance should state that a record must be made of what information was shared, why and with whom.
What to do if this ISP does not apply to your situation	ISPs are not required before we can share personal information. The lack of an ISP must never be a reason for not sharing information that could help a practitioner deliver services. For guidance on information sharing outside of specific ISPs, please refer to [insert details as appropriate].
Who to go to for more guidance on the operation of this protocol	This should list the day-to-day contacts within each agency.
Who to go to for more information about information sharing and data protection in general	This should refer to the organisation's data protection lead.

## Flowchart of key principles for information sharing

