

# **A Memorandum of Understanding between the NSPCC's National Child Trafficking Advice Centre (CTAC) and the Health and Social Care Board (HSB) and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI)**

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## **Introduction**

Trafficking is the recruitment and movement of people for the purpose of exploitation; it is a form of child abuse and requires a safeguarding response. The **NSPCC's Child Trafficking Advice Centre (CTAC)** is a UK wide specialist service whose experienced practitioners provide advice and assistance to professionals anywhere in the UK who come into contact with children who may have been trafficked.

## **Aim**

The aim of this Memorandum of Understanding is to make clear how the HSCB for NI and the PSNI will seek to raise awareness of the role and work of the NSPCC's CTAC service for professionals who come into contact with children and young people who may have been trafficked or are at risk of being trafficked.

## **Legal Basis**

This is a Memorandum of Understanding between the Health and Social Care Board for Northern Ireland (HSCB), the Police Service for Northern Ireland (PSNI) and the NSPCC's Child Trafficking Advice Centre (CTAC)

## **Confidentiality**

This document will be circulated to staff within the HSCB, the PSNI and the NSPCC to explain the nature of the understanding between the parties and to provide information for staff on the role of CTAC and the nature of the service they provide. With agreement with the key parties, this document can be made available to other parties where considered appropriate

## **Parties to the Agreement**

**The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children;** The NSPCC is The NSPCC has been operating as a registered charity, established by Royal Warrant in 1884 Its 2,500 staff are based in the UK and the Channel Islands and working towards one common objective - to end cruelty to children. The **NSPCC's Child Trafficking Advice Centre (CTAC)** is a UK wide specialist service whose experienced practitioners provide advice and assistance to professionals anywhere in the UK who come into contact with children who may have been trafficked.

**Police Service of Northern Ireland:** The Police Service of Northern Ireland's purpose is to make Northern Ireland safer for everyone through professional, progressive policing. This goal is achieved through Policing with the Community .The PSNI is committed to the protection of life and property, preserving order, preventing the commission of crime and, where offences have been committed, bringing offenders to justice. In pursuit of these commitments, the PSNI will deal with every

request for police assistance in a manner that will ensure the maintenance of public confidence, community safety and provide reassurance to the community.

**The Health and Social Care Board:** The Board is responsible for the commissioning of health and social care services for the population of Northern Ireland.

### Application of MOU- (Referrals/Process)

The HSCB and the PSNI undertake to inform all staff who have concerns that a child may have been trafficked that they may seek specialist advice and information from CTAC. *(In order to understand how CTAC can assist staff, information is attached at **Appendix 1** which explains what CTAC does, how they can help, and how they can be contacted.)*

The HSCB and the PSNI undertake to raise awareness of the role of CTAC in respect of protecting children who may be trafficked within their respective organisations and within trusts.

The HSCB and the PSNI will undertake to provide information to all front line professionals who have a role in relation to children and young people to inform them of the role of CTAC and how to contact them. This may be done through intranet, leaflets, posters, training and or awareness raising activities involving CTAC representatives or other appropriate means.

CTAC currently provides regular statistical reports on referrals to the Home Office, The UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) and the Child Exploitation Online Protection centre (CEOP). The NSPCC undertakes to convene an annual meeting with the HSCB and the PSNI to discuss the work undertaken by CTAC, issues arising and to share data on the operation of CTAC in NI.

As a child protection agency, CTAC has a duty to follow up on any cases presented. This means that all cases remain open until the allocated worker and team manager take the joint decision to close them. At all stages CTAC will operate under the auspices of the Children (NI) Order 1995 and Departmental Guidance set out in Co-operating to Safeguard as amended

Information made available to CTAC under the terms of this MOU by those seeking advice and/or information will not automatically be shared with Police unless:

- There is an immediate risk to life or serious injury;
- The caller's disclosure includes a third party allegation about a child and there is an immediate risk;
- The suspected perpetrator holds a position of trust and has access to children;
- The caller confesses or claims to be abusing a child at the time of the call, has abused or will abuse a child.

Details of how CTAC can be contacted are included in the accompanying appendix, which will be made available to staff in the PSNI and the HSCB.

**Signed**

Peter Watt on behalf of the NSPCC for CTAC

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ACC XXXXXXXXXXXX on behalf of the PSNI

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Tony Rogers on behalf of the HSCB for NI

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 1

### The role of the NSPCC's Child Trafficking Advice Centre (CTAC)

- The **NSPCC's Child Trafficking Advice Centre (CTAC)** is a UK wide specialist service whose experienced practitioners provide advice and assistance to professionals anywhere in the UK who come into contact with children who may have been trafficked.

#### Who can contact CTAC?

- CTAC has a UK wide remit and is available to professionals working with children anywhere in the UK
- CTAC offers advice and information to professionals including: social workers, police, teachers, immigration officers, youth offending workers, prison workers, , health professionals etc. (This list is not exhaustive) CTAC has an arrangement to re-direct professionals requiring legal advice to the Wilson and Co specialist immigration advice line 0845 677 2205 (pending an extension of funding after June 2012)
- Members of the public who are concerned about a child are advised to contact the NSPCC on **0808 800 5000**

#### What sort of calls does CTAC deal with?

CTAC can provide advice and information on different aspects of: requests for awareness raising presentations about child trafficking, indicators of child trafficking, social work and police support with case work and investigations, requests for independent child trafficking reports, advice in completing National Referral Mechanism forms, signposting to other agencies and ways of safeguarding children.

#### What service does CTAC provide?

CTAC is staffed by experienced child protection and international social workers and by a police liaison officer. The information<sup>1</sup> shared by callers with NSPCC CTAC will not automatically be shared with the police officer. Decisions to share information are taken on a case by case basis depending on whether it is a child protection concern or consent has been obtained from the caller.

- Calls are dealt with by qualified and experienced social workers.

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<sup>1</sup> The information will not automatically be shared with the police officers unless:

- There is an immediate risk to life or serious injury
- The caller's disclosure includes a third party allegation about a child and there is an immediate risk
- The suspected perpetrator holds a position of trust and has access to children
- The caller confesses or claims to be abusing a child at the time of the call, has abused or will abuse a child

- On receipt of a call, the CTAC duty social worker will have a case discussion and explore the nature of the caller's child trafficking concerns.
- Callers are asked to share their contact details as well as the details of the child; where there are reservations about sharing the details of the child, this is discussed.
- Depending on the information shared and concerns raised about the child, the duty worker makes a decision about whether the case should be allocated as a one off consultation or as a long term piece of work
- Where a the case needs to be referred to the police or children's services, the caller will is asked for some details to identify the child
- Where appropriate, callers may be signposted to other relevant agencies. If all staff are busy, callers can call back later, request a call back or contact CTAC by email

### Contacting CTAC by email at [CTAC@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:CTAC@nspcc.org.uk)

When contacting CTAC by email correspondents are asked to provide as much information as possible about the child and their situation and also to provide details of a named professional in order to ensure that staff know they are speaking to the person who emailed us.

Child trafficking cases can be complex so CTAC staff may call back to talk about the case as email contact cannot replace a thorough case discussion

CTAC aims to call back within 24 hours of receipt of email during the working week

Professional workers concerned that a child is in immediate danger should **not** email as CTAC staff may not be able to respond to email instantly.

### What happens after a referral has been made?

- When the situation has been discussed and concerns explored, the duty worker opens a case. Depending on the nature of the call, CTAC will make a decision about keeping the case open as an ongoing piece of work or whether to treat it as a one-off phone call.
- ***As a child protection agency, CTAC has a duty to follow up on any case presented. This means that all cases remain open until the allocated worker and team manager take the joint decision to close them. At all stages CTAC will operate under the auspices of the Children (NI) Order 1995 and Departmental guidance set out in Co-operating to Safeguard Children as amended***
- CTAC will always keep referrers informed about decisions taken.

### Does CTAC provide direct support for children who have been trafficked?

The service has been developed to support professionals and does not offer direct services for trafficked children.

However, CTAC can provide court reports, which involves meeting a child. CTAC also works alongside a strong committed participation group of young people who have experienced being trafficked to ensure children stay at the centre of this work. Where appropriate, CTAC will also try to signpost you to a local service.

### **Contacting CTAC**

Professionals who think a child may have been trafficked can call the NSPCC Child Trafficking Advice Centre (CTAC) for advice and information on **0800 107 7057** Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm or email **[CTAC@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:CTAC@nspcc.org.uk)**.

Outside those hours, contact the **NSPCC 0808 800 5000**