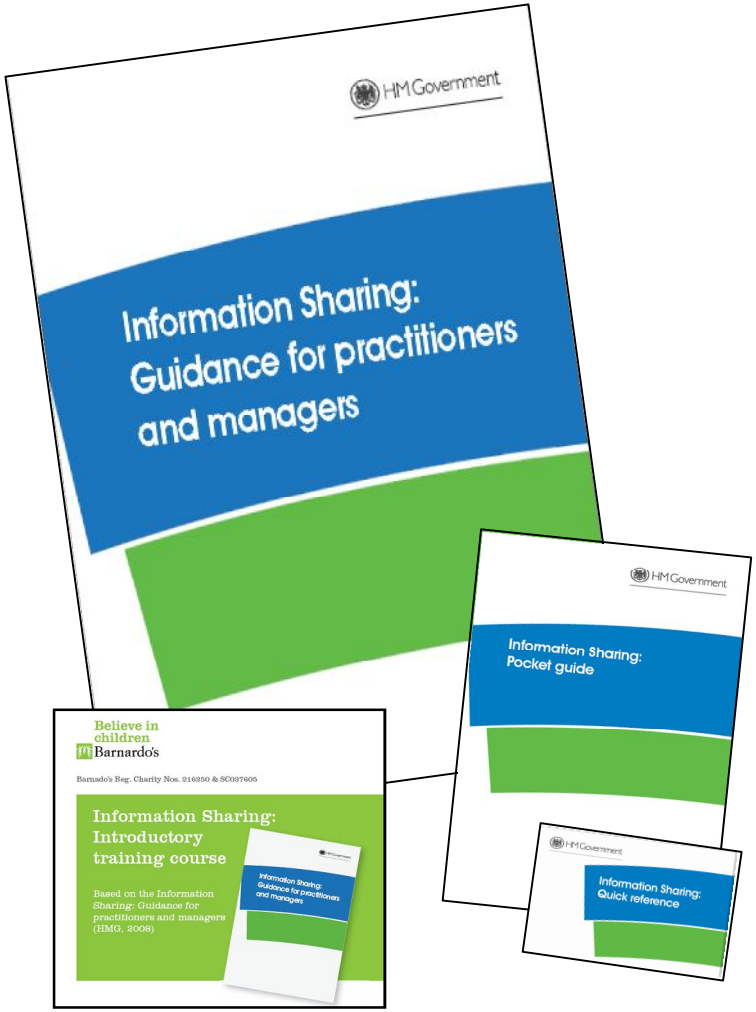
Information Sharing: Supporting early intervention and prevention



Denise Blunn
Deputy Director
Improving Information Sharing and Management Programme (IISaM)

Safeguarding Children: Prevention, Protection, Provision Conference
Thursday 18 June

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Why is information sharing important?

- Effective information sharing is essential:
  - to enable early intervention and preventative work
  - for safeguarding and promoting welfare
  - for wider public protection
  - to support integrated working

- Poor decision making, based on incomplete information, can mean that children and young people ‘slip through the net’

- This can lead to poor outcomes or, in the worst cases, tragedies such as Victoria Climbié and Baby P

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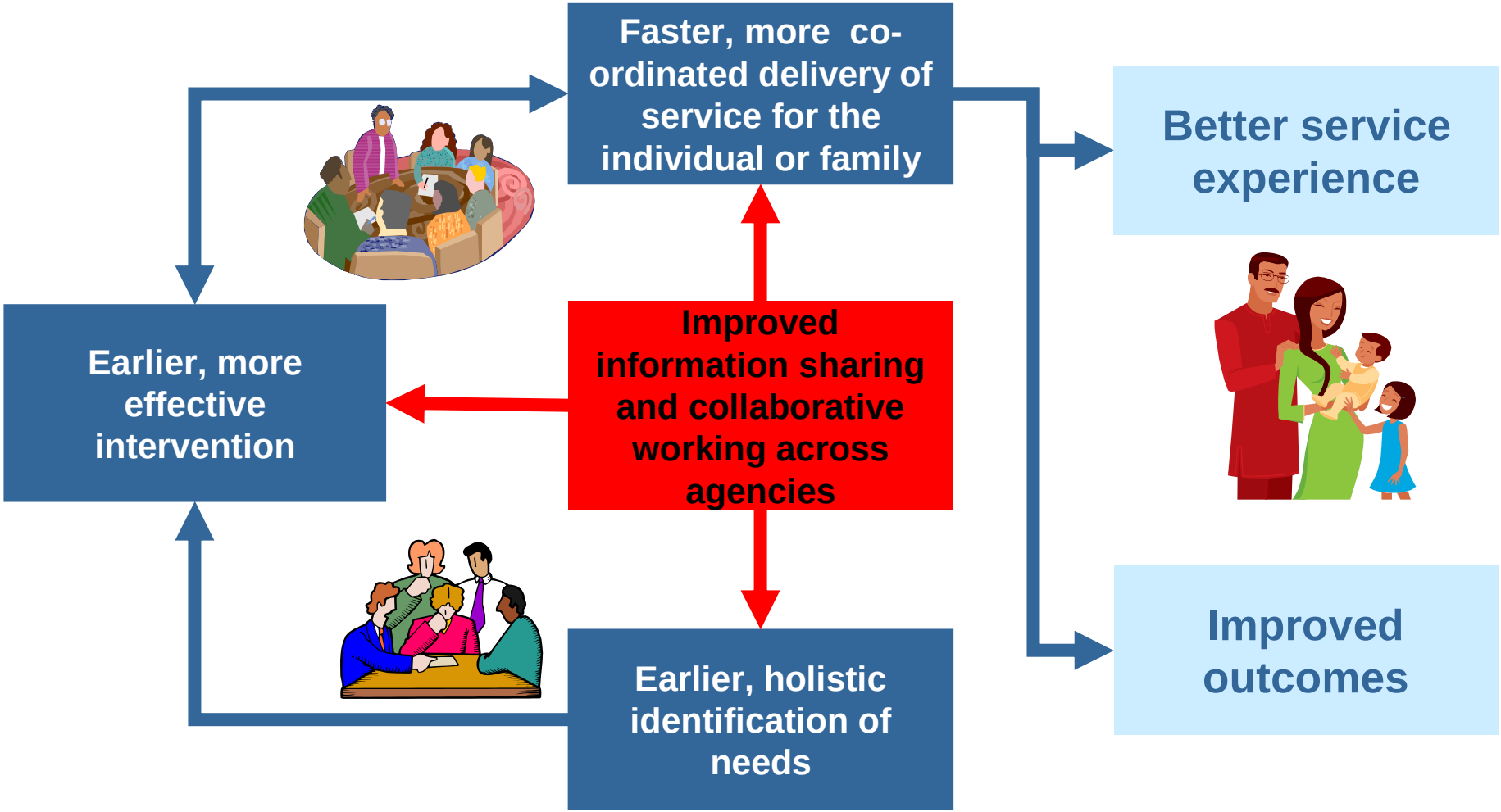
Information sharing is at the core of integrated working and improving outcomes



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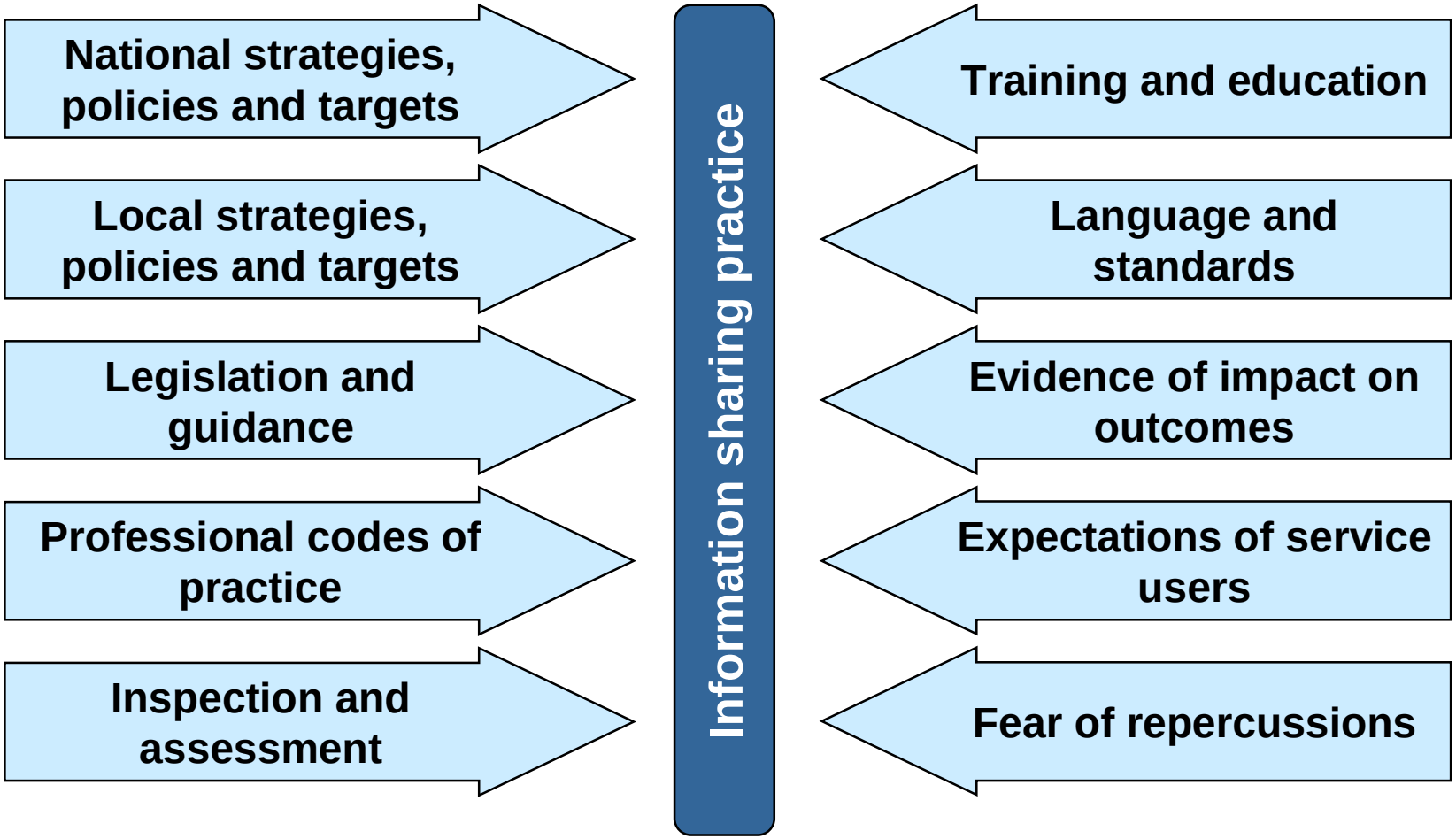
Some of the factors that influence information sharing practice



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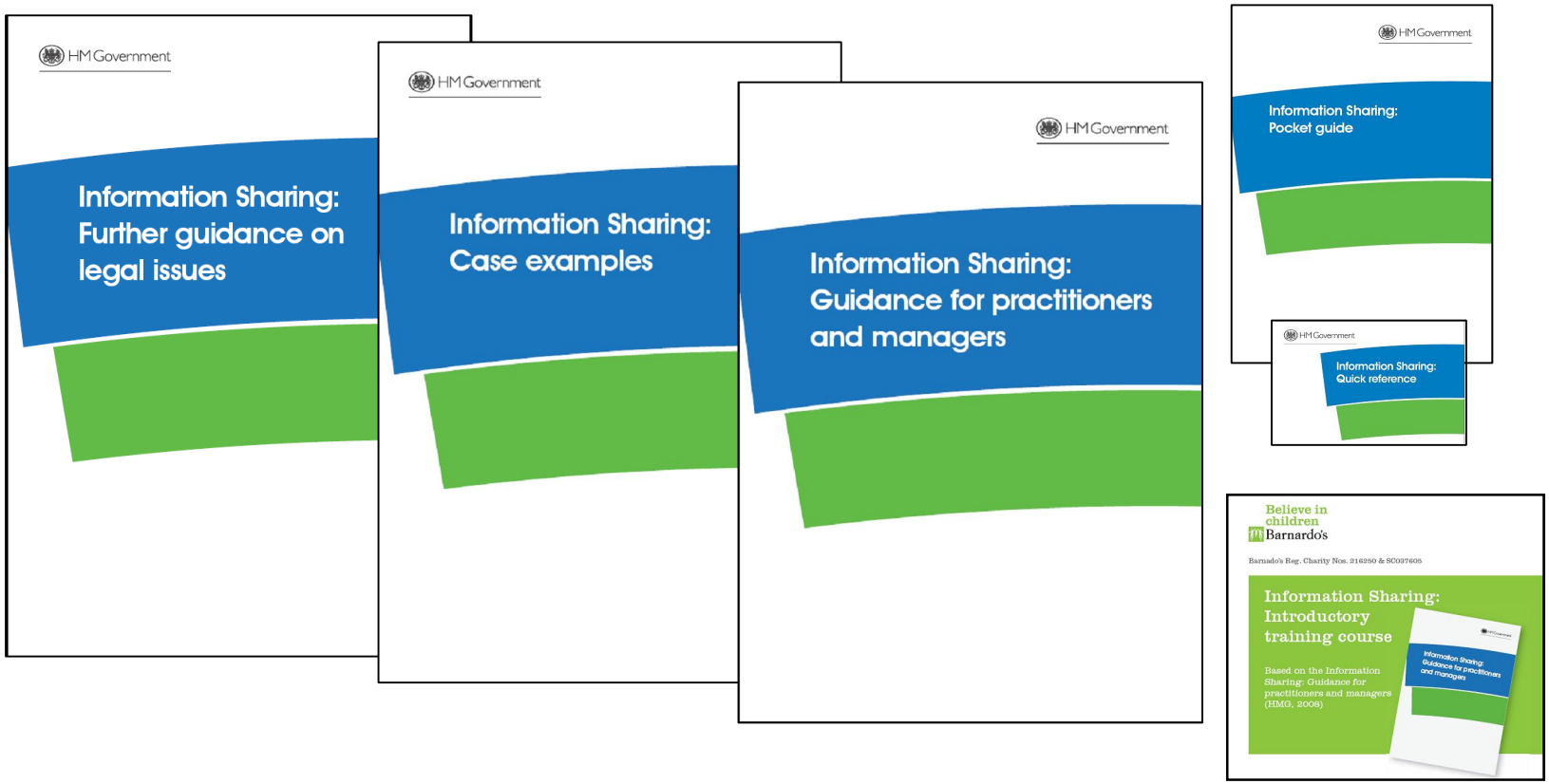
Information sharing guidance suite of products



Cross-government guidance, first published in 2006, has been updated, extended to cover the adult workforce and republished October 2008

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Formal endorsement of the guidance

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Extracts from the information sharing guidance

- You may lawfully share confidential information, even where you do not have consent, if this can be justified in the public interest
- A public interest can arise in a wide range of circumstances, for example, to protect children from significant harm or to protect adults from serious harm
- The key factors in deciding whether or not to share confidential information are necessity and proportionality, ie whether the proposed sharing is likely to make an effective contribution to preventing the risk and whether the public interest in sharing information overrides the interest in maintaining confidentiality
- In making the decision you must weigh up what might happen if the information is shared against what might happen if it is not and make a decision based on professional judgement

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The Laming report and the Government response

- In the progress report on child protection, Lord Laming noted that there were still concerns about information sharing and that the laws governing data protection and privacy are still not well understood
- The report makes a specific recommendation that all Children's Trust partners should consistently apply the information sharing guidance
- The Department published its detailed response to Lord Laming's report on 6 May – all the recommendations have been accepted and a high-level plan of action outlined
- Work is now underway by the Department to develop the detailed action and resource plan to deliver these recommendations

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Further information

The following can be found at: www.dscf.gov.uk/ecm/informationsharing

- updated guidance and supporting materials
- details of how to order hard copies of the guidance and the introductory training course on CD
- statement on applicability of information sharing protocols
- document detailing what organisations said about the guidance

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