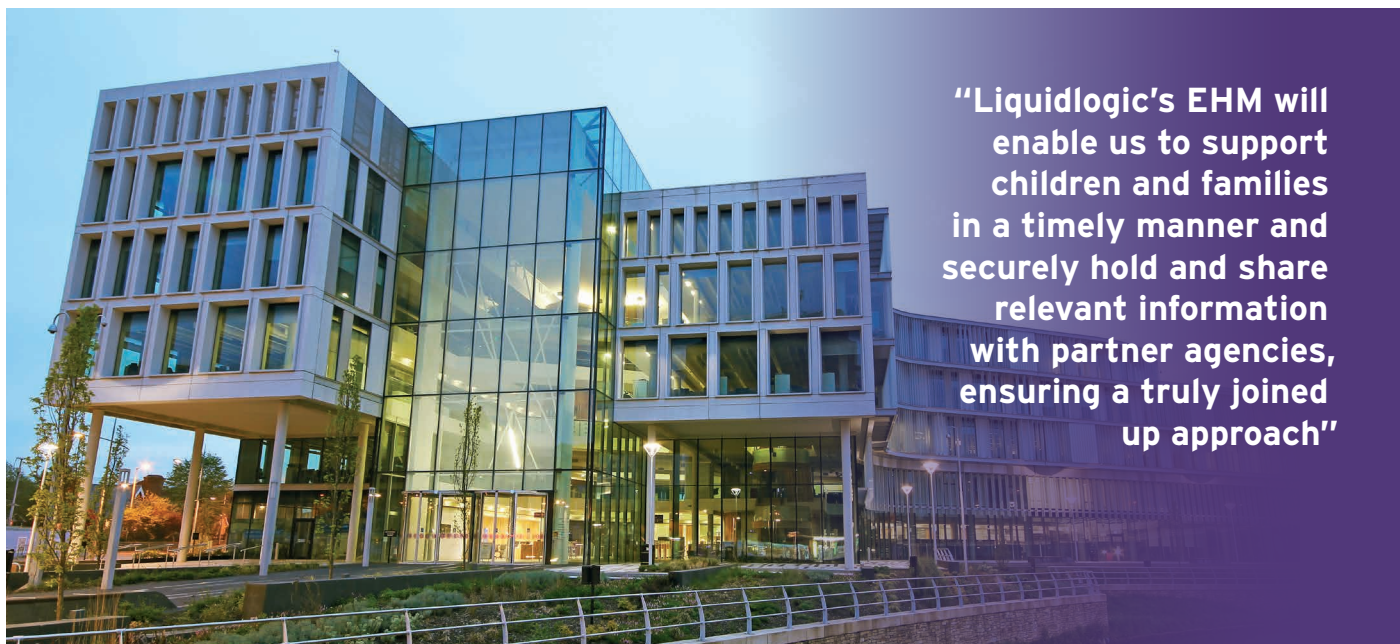


ACloserLook



Facilitating a joined up approach with early help @ Rochdale

Introduction

Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council lies approximately 10 miles North East to the city of Manchester. The Council supports a racially varied population of over 200,000 with the market town of Rochdale being the largest settlement and administrative centre.

Rochdale MBC's vision for Children's Social Care Services is to promote the health and wellbeing of the Borough's most vulnerable children and young people, and enable those children most in need to thrive.

The Old Way

For many years, the CAF team at Rochdale used a standalone Access database to record CAF episodes. Referrals came via fax or by post and were manually inputted by the team who, as the only team able to access the database, managed all incoming calls to check for existing information.

There were concerns around the safety of existing referral methods, which were completed verbally, by fax and post. Something also needed to be done about the additional workload placed upon the CAF team.

Rochdale deliberated over the merits of an electronic CAF system, so when the Government announced the plans for a National CAF system, it seemed the obvious choice. When the National scheme was disbanded, discussions around potential suppliers of an electronic system resurfaced.

Evaluation

Scott Moseley, MIS Portfolio Holder, Rochdale

MBC comments; "From our appraisal of Liquidlogic's Early Help Module (EHM) we concluded that the system met our requirements for flexibility and configurability, adapting to the many different working practices of CAF teams across the County. In addition to this there were obvious advantages to the Council using Liquidlogic's Children's Social Care System (LCS), including the look and feel being familiar as well as the 'step-up, step-down' process between both systems."

During the EHM planning process, the Council was inspected by Ofsted whose report highlighted the need to improve systems around early help rapidly. With that in mind the decision was taken to implement an off the shelf version of the Liquidlogic EHM with only some minor configuration changes.

Implementation

Phase One of the customisation included linking Rochdale's Education System, Capita One, to the Liquidlogic Children's System and also to the Liquidlogic Single View System, both of which have been in operation for some time within the Authority. EHM was then also connected to Single View, allowing users to search multiple systems and provided a composite view of records across data sources.

Reporting

As Liquidlogic's Early Help Module shares a database with LCS, this allows comprehensive reporting across social care and early help records which is a dramatic improvement on the previous disparate systems and with plans to implement a Business Objects Universe, the reporting function will become even further enhanced.

The Future

“ **Scott concludes:** "Rochdale's plans for the future include linking up with partner agencies such as the Police, Health and Education via Liquidlogic's EHM. Liquidlogic's EHM will enable us to support children and families in a timely manner and securely hold and share relevant information with partner agencies, ensuring a truly joined up approach."

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