
OTTER.AI POLICY

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Review note

This document was read during the review of the Herefordshire tri.x Local Resources platform, October 2022-March 2023. The document itself has not been changed, other than for the insertion of this note, and the content and form of guidance has not been reviewed as would have been anticipated when first published. The original author is no longer employed by the Council. The guidance has been retained in Local Resources because Otter AI software remains available to download (confirmed by Hoople IT Service Desk, 20 February 2023, INC292359).

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24 February 2023

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Contents

Introduction	3
Scope	3
Training	3
Purpose	4
Retention and content of recordings	4
Compliance	5
Policy Compliance	5

1. Policy

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Children's Social Workers, managers and front line members of staff are committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for children, young people and families. Statutory visits and case supervision are undertaken to monitor case progression. Each visit and supervision must be entered into the case recording system (Mosaic) and a visit summary included.

1.1.2 Managers also undertake monthly personal supervision with members of their team to discuss:

- Wellbeing
- Absence (leave, sickness)
- Performance (including overview of caseload and workload)
- Contract (agency staff only)
- Professional development and training needs
- Any additional roles / service representation
- Any other issues / concerns for the supervisee
- Any information from supervisor not included in team meetings

Additional Manager's supervision to include:

- Service performance
- Budget
- Staff performance
- Recruitment and workforce
- Policy and procedure
- Projects

1.1.3 Otter.ai (Otter) is a piece of voice recognition software designed to convert speech into text. By incorporating Otter into recording procedures, it reduces the time spent on typing tasks. .

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 Otter is compatible with android phones. Eight front line members of staff who have already been issued with android works phones have taken part in a 10 week trial in relation to visits. Upon trial end, a feedback report was presented to senior management and Information Governance Team. Feedback from staff was that software was extremely useful.

1.2.2 Otter will be used immediately after the visit / supervision has been undertaken to summarise the conversation / findings at the visit. By dictating into the android works phone Otter will convert this into text which can then be access via their login on a work's laptop.

1.2.3 Once the speech has been converted there is an option to manually edit the text that has been converted.

1.3 Training

1.3.1 Staff will be issued with phones compatible with Otter.

1.3.2 Phones and training will be provided team by team whereby priority teams and staff have been identified by Heads of Service.

1.3.3 Training will be provided to all staff upon receiving the phones, ensuring there is minimal time difference between receiving the phone and receiving the training.

1.3.4 Otter is only compatible and accessible via Google Chrome. Herefordshire Council's default browser is Internet Explorer.

1.3.5 Training will include downloading Otter software, creating an account, use of the app / app navigation and downloading Google Chrome. Not using identifiable information will also be a significant part of the training. This is also outlined in **1.5.5** of this policy.

1.3.6 Communications will be sent to staff informing them not to download / use Otter until training has been received.

1.3.7 Once existing staff have been trained, Otter training will be included as part of the initial induction / training for new starters.

1.3.8 A declaration form will be signed by each member of staff before they use Otter.

1.4 Purpose

1.4.1 A large number of visits recorded are out of timescale and or not recorded on Mosaic. Each manager undertakes monthly case supervision and personal supervision for each members of staff.

1.4.2 Otter has the following outcomes:

- Significantly reduces time spent typing tasks
- Reduces the number of overdue / out of timescale visits
- Improves quality of recordings
- Improves staff morale by reducing workload Further use of Otter will be explored to potentially save a considerable amount of time when typing notes for other tasks

1.5 Retention and content of recordings

1.5.1 Otter is a piece of software designed and owned by an American company and so recordings are sent to and stored on a server in America. This raises data security issues in relation to the Privacy Shield and its compliance with UK data protection legislation. Therefore use of Otter is being restricted until these issues have been resolved.

1.5.2 Once the recording has been finalised and Mosaic updated, staff are to delete the recording from the phone within 2 working days.

1.5.3 Managers will have access to staff in their team's recordings via the 'Groups'.

1.5.4 Members of staff are responsible for deleting all recordings before they leave the Local Authority or move into a different role.

1.5.5 Managers will monitor recordings and action as appropriate should a member of staff have a period of long term sickness. CSWM will also have the access to delete previous recordings should a member of their staff not delete records as per **1.5.4**

1.5.6 Recordings in relation to case visits must be used on **works phones** only, not on personal phones.

1.5.7 Staff are to record themselves **only**. Under no circumstance should a service user, family member or another member of staff be recorded.

1.5.8 Recordings should **not** include information that can identify an individual. This includes uncommon full names, addresses etc. Examples are given below:

- ✓ When I arrived at the house **John** appeared clean and the house was tidy (*John is the child's name and is not linked to his surname so minimises use of identifiable data*)
- ✓ When I arrived **Mrs J** had just bathed **John** (*this minimises the use of identifiable data*)
- ✓ **John** and his **sister** are enjoying playing for the new sports teams at school (*the lack of anything identifiable about his sister minimises risks of anyone being able to identify them*)
- ✗ **John Parker** and his **7 year old sister, Melody-Leanne** are enjoying playing for the new sports teams at **Riverside Primary School**. (*John & his sister are now completely identifiable in their own right and that they attend Riverside. This would be poor practice.*)
- ✗ I visited **John** at **1a XXXX Avenue** (*addresses are identifiable pieces of information. This would be poor practice.*)
- ✗ When I arrived at the house **John Xavier Patrick Parker** (*John is clearly identifiable and this would be poor practice. If the point of recording his name in this way is to note his first names, don't use his surname as well.*)
- ✗ **John's twin Amelia** appeared to be upset with him when I arrived at the house (*twins / common sibling names are identifiable pieces of information*)

1.5.9 A lot of the identifiable data will appear in relation to visits and case supervision on the main Mosaic record and do not need to be repeated in a visit record.

2. Compliance

2.1 The Council must comply with legal, statutory, regulatory or contractual obligations related to data security. They take all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of inappropriate data sharing however, should the data be lost or the recording of the data be overheard, the risks of identifying the individuals involved is minimised if the above steps are taken.

2.2 Policy Compliance

2.2.1 If any user is found to have breached this policy, they may be subject to disciplinary action. If you do not understand the implications of this policy or how it may apply to you, seek advice from your line manager.

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0.02	Draft	29/04/19	Review	Trial end – as per previous agreement the policy would be updated before rolled out to other members of staff	1-5
0.03	Draft	24/02/2023	Note inserted	Query status and availability of software	Page 1 and document classification tables

