



**The  
Fostering  
Network**

# **Practice Support to Fostering Services**

**Kim Harris Practice Support Consultant**

**The Fostering Network Regional Conference**

**South West**

**20<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

# Presentation Overview

- Work of Practice Support Team (PST)
- Role of regional consultant
- Up to date issues in your region
- Our current work and plans to support your practice.

# PST – WHO ARE WE?

**NORTH EAST**

[keith.miller@fostering.net](mailto:keith.miller@fostering.net)

**YORKSHIRE & HUMBERSIDE**

[maria.chase@fostering.net](mailto:maria.chase@fostering.net)

**NORTH WEST**

[judy.bell@fostering.net](mailto:judy.bell@fostering.net)

**MIDLANDS**

[sab.jagpal@fostering.net](mailto:sab.jagpal@fostering.net)

**LONDON & EAST**

[joanna.adande@fostering.net](mailto:joanna.adande@fostering.net)

**LONDON & SOUTH EAST**

[diane.heath@fostering.net](mailto:diane.heath@fostering.net)

**SOUTH WEST**

[kim.harris@fostering.net](mailto:kim.harris@fostering.net)

**Practice Support Team Manager**

[helen.keaney@fostering.net](mailto:helen.keaney@fostering.net)

**Support Services Administrator**

[angela.sinclair@fostering.net](mailto:angela.sinclair@fostering.net)

## What do we do?

- Promote good practice
- Facilitate regional forums
- Represent member views
- Contribute to sector practice developments
- Update members on the work of The Fostering Network
- Develop training and consultancy
- Act as a source of advice, information and support for organisational members.



## Our aim

Our central aim is to promote good practice in fostering, ensuring that children and young people benefit from foster care, that they have a voice and are able to reach their full potential.

**What topics would you expect to be in the top five that fostering service staff ask us about?**



## Top five topics for enquiries to PST across England

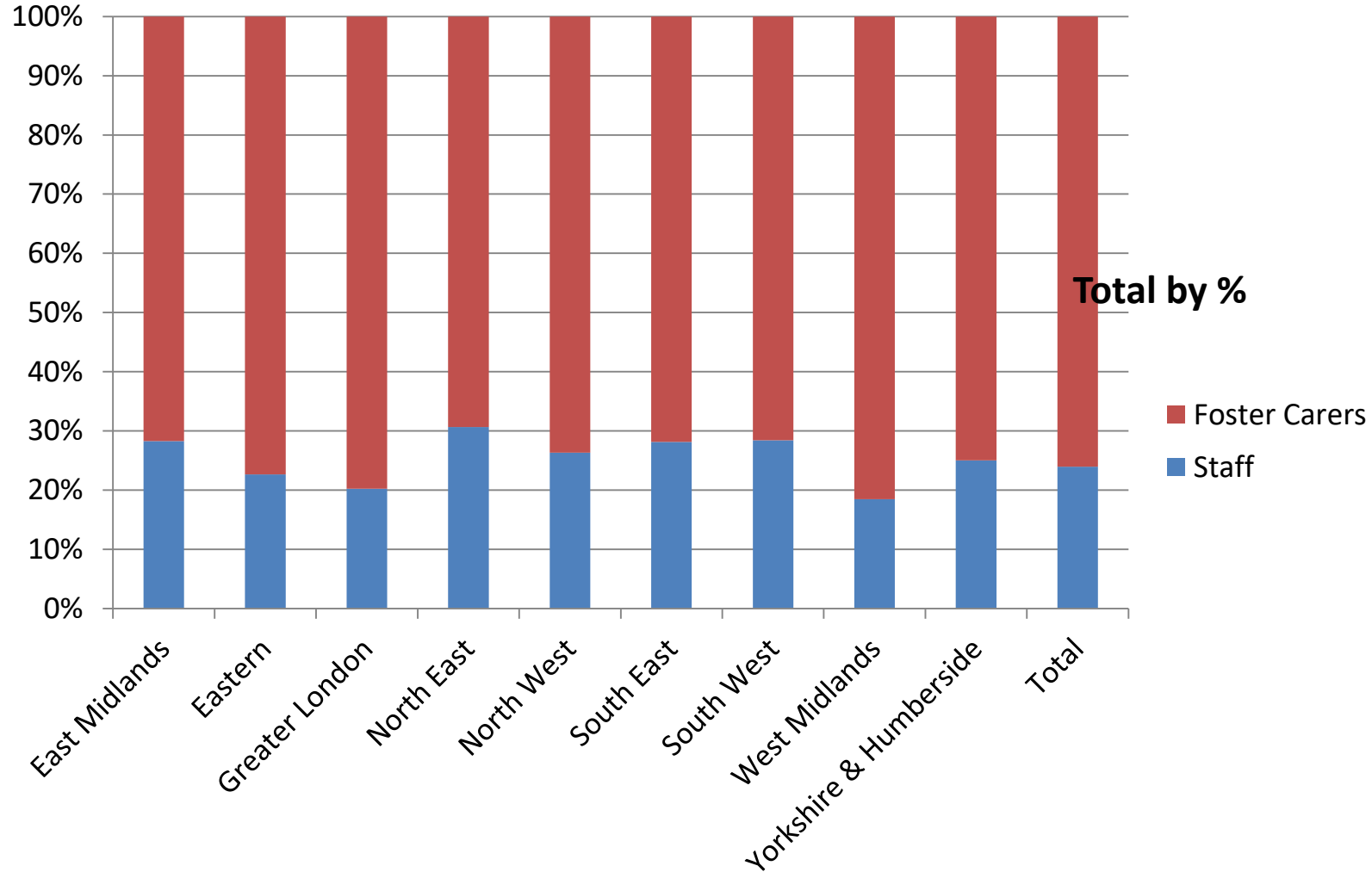
- Kinship care/connected persons/family & friends
- Approval and assessment of foster carers
- Legislation, regulations and guidance
- Fostering Panels
- Record keeping.



## Top five members' helpline topics over the last year

- Financial issues
- Allegations and standard of care concerns
- Review of approval
- Disruption of placement
- Record keeping and data protection.

# Total helpline calls by region



## Top five practice issues raised by fostering service members in the South West region

- Assessment & Approval (Inc. transfer of carers)
- Reviews of foster carers
- Kinship care/connected persons
- Legislation, policy and research
- Staying Put

Followed by . . . . .

- Health & Safety (Inc. social media)
- Allegations
- Independent support
- Finance
- DBS checks.

## What does this information tells us?

- Type of enquirer
- Understanding of the legislation
- Time and resources
- Confidence in practice.



## Practice enquiries – what do we know?

Discuss the practice enquiries on your table with others and agree your answers.



## Your feedback

- *‘Really useful to talk this through’*
- *‘Your views are really welcomed’*
- *‘Really appreciate this update – it makes clearer what we can advise the applicant’*
- *‘We will be using this information in our thinking’*



## Practice Forums in the South West

PST meet regularly with our members at a number of different forums. In the South West . . .

<b>We directly facilitate:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SW IFP Forum</li></ul>
<b>We attend and provide information to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SW LA Training Forum</li><li>• SW LA Recruitment &amp; Retention Forum</li><li>• SW FCA Chairs Forum</li></ul>
<b>We would like to develop:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• SW LA Managers Forum</li><li>• SW LA Connected Persons Forum</li><li>• SW Panel Chairs Forum</li></ul>

# Representation

We consult with you and represent your views to a range of key national steering groups as well as organisations such as the Department for Education and Ofsted.

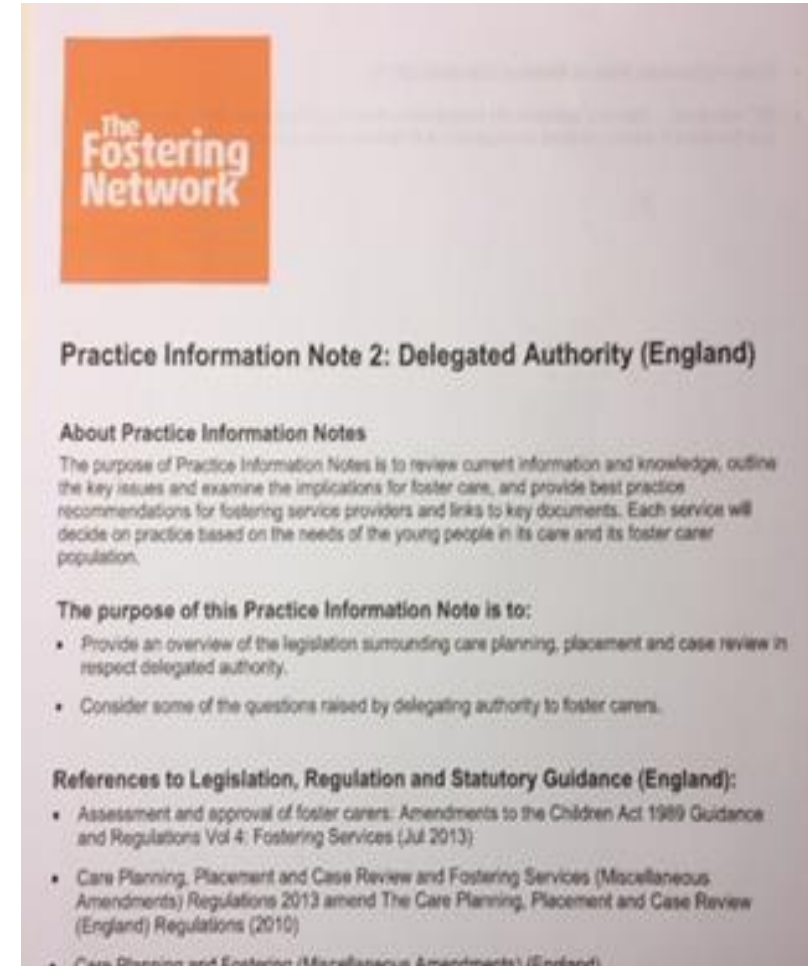




# Practice Information

We produce Practice Information Notes (PINs) on topics such as:

- Smoking and e cigarettes
- Exemptions
- Foster Carer Reviews
- Delegated Authority.

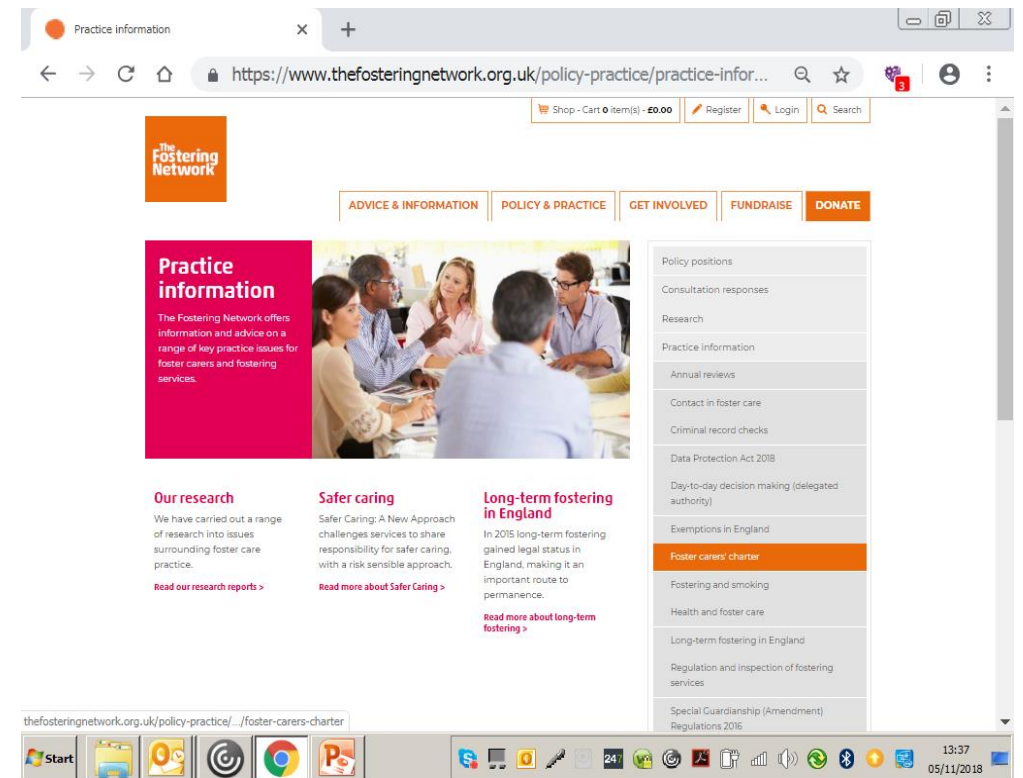


# Webpage development

We write practice information on our website for our members and are committed to adding to this content over time.

- Gaps?
- Ideas for new topic areas?

Let us know and we will consider these as part of our programme of development.



## Our message

- There are different but overlapping concerns between staff and foster carer members
- A greater understanding of regulations, guidance and good practice can help to develop better support to foster carers, and have a positive impact on work with young people
- Working together can achieve this.

## Contact details

**Kim Harris** - Practice Support Consultant, SW region

[Kim.harris@fostering.net](mailto:Kim.harris@fostering.net)

Telephone 07519119548

**Amy Wilson** - Membership officer, West of England

[Amy.Wilson@fostering.net](mailto:Amy.Wilson@fostering.net)

07712526754

**Member Helpline:** 0207 401 9582

Email: [info@fostering.net](mailto:info@fostering.net)



# Thank you

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