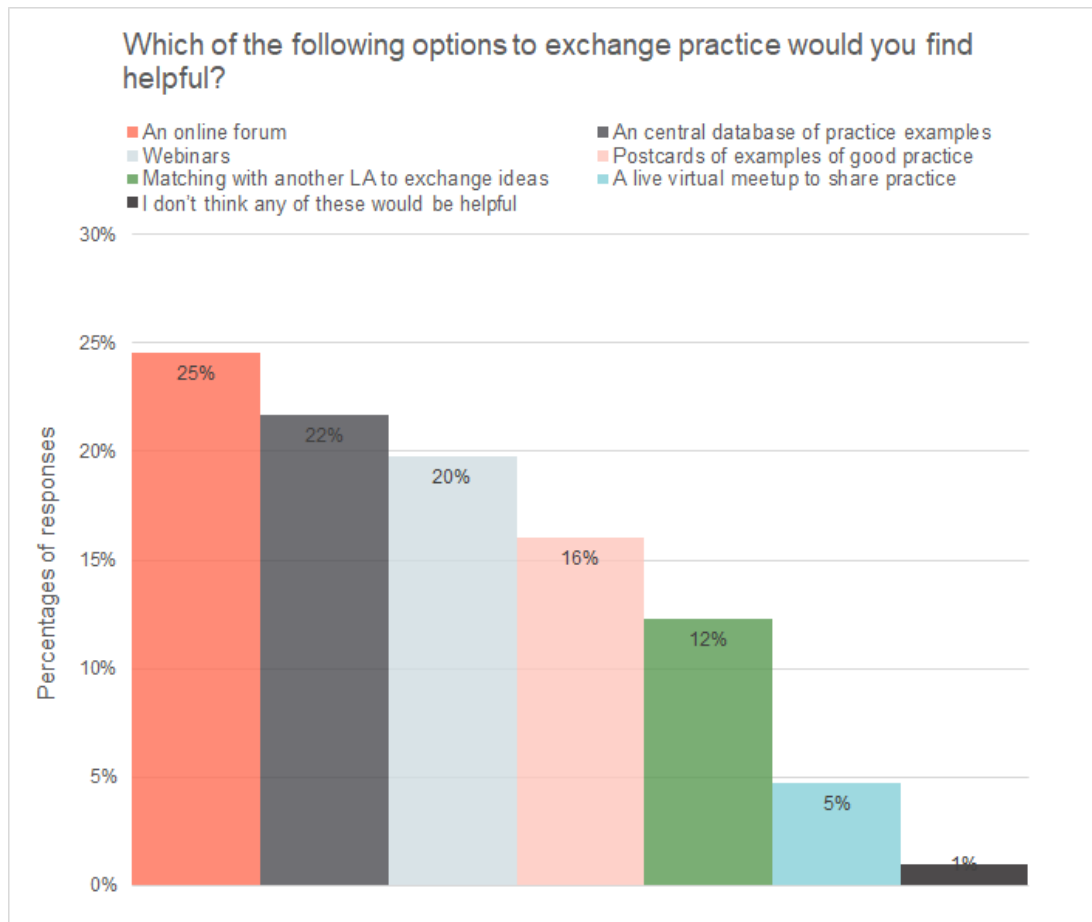


# Polling results report: 22 December 2020

## This report

This report covers the period between the 08 December and 21 December 2020. Participants were asked to provide examples of innovative practice as a response to the changing landscape created by COVID -19. They were also asked how they would prefer to share good practice with colleagues and other organisations out of a list of options provided.

## Sharing good practice examples



The most popular mode of sharing information voted for by participants was for an online forum.

The second most popular option was for a practice database. WWCS already has an [Evidence store](#) database which currently provides systematic reviews on interventions already available. This is a database of evidence based reviews. It does not at this stage collate practice examples but this might be an option to explore for future development. Exchanging ideas with a matched local authority did not receive a high level of votes in the poll, however one participant suggested it would be useful to discuss practice with other local authorities for example , regarding the challenges of Special Guardianships. Another



suggestion was to arrange regional events virtually, which might encourage a larger attendance and that these could be interactive and possibly a workshop style event.

### **Innovative practice**

In total, thirty-nine practitioners shared examples of best practice, key learning and ideas for disseminating good practice. Practitioners shared several benefits of virtual working; they noted the benefits both for families and at the organisation level; also, how the use of technology enables staff to complete direct work with children during a pandemic. Furthermore, staff shared creative examples of maintaining *in person* contact with families and provided ideas on disseminating best practice.

### **Benefits of virtual working**

Some staff noted multiple benefits of virtual working both for families and CSC staff. For example, one person noticed *'there has been better participation and engagement from families'*, this is because *'most meetings have been virtual with parents... [and the] majority will attend ...they have found it less stressful than having to travel to be somewhere'*. Other benefits at the organisational level include *'saving so much time, travelling and paper.'*

Also, *'virtual meetings can include wider professionals like health/police more easily'*. Regular meetings such as CP Conferences or CLA Reviews have been able to continue on platforms such as Microsoft Teams. In general, practitioners shared consensus that *'completing meetings and visits virtually can be useful'* and one person notes that *'virtual meetings should continue'*.

### **Use of technology for direct work**

One person shares that for them *'the best innovation has been direct work over video call'*. Other practitioners shared similar sentiments: *'using video allows you to still complete direct work and build a rapport'* and another person suggests to *'mindfully turn on video cameras for meetings, as seeing the other person [is] more effective'*.

One practitioner recommends using [FireFly](#), a website dedicated to mental health awareness with resources, *'there is a very very clear step by step explanation of how to implement the direct work, sheets to print and even a YouTube video to follow and suggested questions to ask'*. This practitioner had found it very useful.

### **Maintaining team communication**

Several staff mentioned the importance of maintaining contact with their team. For example one person shares *'actively setting up regular, informal meetings with the team, for support and also as a manager, to visually check my team seem to be ok...'*. Other types of contact include *'team meetings on Skype'* and *'virtual coffee breaks and check ins'*.

### **Creative use of 'in person' contact**



For others, examples of innovation during Covid-19 include finding new and safe ways to engage with families *'in person'*. For example, *'in nice weather using gardens and outside space to meet'*. Other examples include *'sessions at the window'*, *'socially distanced walks in parks'*, and *'dropping off supplies like bread and milk'*. However, another person shares, for them, they are *'continuing to go to family's homes and children's schools so practice to some extent is 'normal'*, which highlights how local authorities have given differing guidance on *'in person'* visits.

### **How can we share best practice?**

Practitioners want to see best practice collated and shared regularly in effective ways. For example, one person suggests *'a real time catalogue of good practice, why it worked well and what they would adapt for next time'*. Another person would like to see *'thematic emails sent out: e.g. on 'direct work with children', 'virtual meeting ideas' etc.'*. Another idea is to have *'regional development events' as a means to share best practice and 'these could be virtual to support attendance'*. Sharing learning between local authorities e.g. on *'Special Guardianship challenges'*, was also noted.

### **About WWCSO Polling**

What Works for Children's Social Care runs regular polls with social workers who have registered with us. Social workers are currently employed in a range of organisations and we canvas their opinions about our current and future research agenda as well as topics impacting on social work practice. There are 864 social workers currently registered to participate. 47 Social Workers responded to this poll with 39 social workers providing free text responses sharing innovative practice ideas..