

Ealing I-SAID Service Sustainability and Continuity Plan



Introduction

Aim of our Ealing ISAID Sustainability and Continuity Plan

The purpose of the Sustainability Plan is to ensure that critical functions and services undertaken by Ealing ISAID service of Family Action are able to continue in all circumstances.

The Plan provides details of how this will be achieved promptly, as cost effectively as possible whilst maintaining and supporting the service.

Crucial to the implementation and effectiveness of the Plan are the following points:

- Commitment from senior management, and staff
- Clearly defined responsibilities
- Identification, protection and availability of essential records such as electronic data, Salesforce Inform, documentation and procedural manuals have been completed
- Plans for premises, equipment and services required for recovery are in place
- Awareness and training events are available to ensure all key staff are aware of their roles
- The Plan is tested on a regular basis

The Plan objectives are:

- Take all steps necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all staff and service users and others we may come into contact with.
- Define and prioritise the critical aims and objectives of the IAS programme 2020/2021
- Analyse the emergency risks for the service and IASP objectives
- Analyse strengths of the service and achievements as part of the IASP
- Detail the agreed response to reduced funding
- Identify Key Contacts and Stakeholders and priorities for the service
- Identify what needs to be sustained
- Outcomes achieved and strategies to prioritise going forward
- Resources needed
- Innovations- whether service will need to implement an innovative way to acquire more resources

Section 1:

The information, advice and support that Ealing ISAID offers is firmly based in the CaF Act and the SEND Code of Practice. Ealing ISAID- Ealing SENDIAS service) is an outsourced, statutory service as part of the Ealing Local Authority area. We provide unbiased information and advice about the SEND Law, children and young people's rights and role within the processes, Local Authority's policies and procedures and about the policy and practice in local schools and other settings. We do not give priority to any particular impairment, disability or special educational need. By being impartial we aim to help parents, children and young people have clear, accurate and relevant information and will help them take part in decisions about their lives. The service is out-sourced. We deliver services from premises separate from the local authority and CCG. The IAS has distinct service identity and separate phone line, separate website, team email for enquiries and support. The service has Impartiality and confidentiality policies.



When working with children, young people, parents and carers we ensure that we do the following:

- At point of first contact we gain permission to hold data on our InForm (Salesforce) database. If families do not wish to have their information recorded a record of the call only will be held with no personal details.
- Providing children, young people, parents and carers with a balanced and comprehensive range of information setting out all options available, enabling them to make informed decisions
- Supporting parents and young people that do not agree by working impartially and also separately with both the parents and the young people.
- Giving focused and timely advice to parents and young people and Impartial support with paperwork/meetings and empowering the service users on how to express their views and aspirations
- Empowering parents through group work/trainings and delivery of workshops, including improved communication with SEN caseworker in LA, SENCOs and Inclusion managers in schools

Our flyers and service information leaflet, social media and website explains our Impartial and confidential role and the team also reiterate this at meetings and in telephone calls. We produce termly and annual reports to the LA, which demonstrate progress and achievements against the IASSN Service Standards. We also have a Service Development Plan that is based on an analysis of service user and staff development needs.

Section 2: How is the risk managed by the service

The Risk Register and Relative Risk Grid

These identify all the main risks affecting the service, from Health and Safety, Child Protection through to cuts in public services and Government policy change. It looks at the risks, the likelihood of the event happening and what we do to mitigate the risk – and its potential impact.

Section 3: Sustainable service

Ealing ISAID, as part of the national charity Family Action has its own network which staff of the service access through terminal services which can be accessed remotely. All staff have access to a Family Action email address and the intranet which provides current policies and procedures and news.

Intranet

Contains all policy and procedure documents, key information and contact lists. Can also be accessed via the intranet if the Family Action network is not available.

Client Case files

Staff are encouraged to maintain computerised client records as it is more secure and minimises disruption arising from emergencies.

Loss of access to the Family Action Network

Co-located servers, agreed targets and IT infrastructure mean disruption should be less than 1 working day. A loss of broadband is mitigated by managers having Smartphone handsets – in order to access emails and key data.



Section 4: What has been achieved with IASP funding

IASP funding has been very useful recourse to our service. The funding has allowed us as a service to ensure compliance with our Minimum Standards, maintain appropriate staffing levels, allow for training and development, and achieve new improved engagement with children and young people. The IASP funding has improved the overall offer of Ealing ISAID service.

- Commissioning, governance & management arrangements:
 - Strengthened the strategic foundation of ISAID by working with Health and Social Care professionals and implement the Advisory Group to support joint commissioning and strengthened strategic relationship. Co-production with education, health and social care services to co- design the service together with stakeholders and improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
- Operational Functions:
 - Worked to develop an innovative Engagement strategy for hard to reach communities
 - Worked to develop innovative, accessible resources for children, young people, parents/carers and professionals
 - Worked to improve the children and young people engagement strategy and children and young people offer
 - Delivered additional multiagency outreach, training sessions and drop-in events with partner agencies, in particular health and social care, Post 16, early years.
 - Updated the ISAID service website and social media, and lead on creation of Family
- Strategic Functions:
 - Worked on strategic planning, and joint work with Ealing LA and CCG. Work with the LA and CCG has been done to ensure that the commissioned ISAID service continues to be jointly commissioned
 - Worked strategically across the local area to ensure the voices of children, young people and their parents are heard e.g. Ealing SEND Executive Board, SEND Strategy meetings, ESCAN (Education, Health and Social care services meetings) to influence policy and practice and shape service provision for children, young people and their parents.
 - Continued to work strategically with voluntary sector organisations, the Ealing Parent Carer Forum and the Steering Group to be a collective voice for families with SEND in Ealing, including joint working and supporting outreach and community events.
 - Worked with Ealing Advice Consortium, Advice Forum and Ealing Advice Steering Group. Use meetings with strategic leads and decision makers as an opportunity to bring the focus on relevant issues on the agenda and keep children and young people with SEND in focus.



- Worked strategically with Ealing LA ESCAN and CCG to improve the 'All About Me' template for children and young people; joint work with the LA on the Digital EHCP platform and parental access, ensuring all parents/carers and young people are consulted and well-informed. Work with the LA to ensure that the portal and documents are legally compliant and become useful resources for families and professionals.

•Professional development

- Developing and delivering training workshops around exclusions, post 16 options for professionals e.g. schools, Early Years, SAFE team (early help) and health
- Co-facilitated Family Action's IAS Service Managers' Forum to share knowledge and good practice, ensure consistency across all of Family Action's IAS services, and develop robust mechanisms within our organisation to ensure SEND is always on Family Action's agenda.

Section 5: How the service will ensure continuity

The outcomes set for the previous year and objectives worked towards were and remain the right ones to continue with for Ealing ISAID.

The impact that the IASP funding had, meant that we were able to deliver on these outcomes and that those accessing the service have had the best experience possible.

We currently have a response time of within 48 hours and families can access the service 24 hours a day – leaving a message/email outside of our opening hours.

We have promoted the service and made ourselves well known within the local area. The impact of the IASP funding was a significant increase in enquiries and complex casework. However, we are being realistic and are aware that this level of delivery is not sustainable without further funding and/or contribution. In order to continue building on this success, we will need further investment. However, sustaining these outcomes does not solely depend on funding.

We have managed to streamline some expenses, especially due to COVID. However, we have ensured that to meet service demand these savings have been reinvested into delivering virtual work and ensuring those who need to access us, can.

This has meant that we are able to offer workshops in the evenings, cutting down the costs of hiring a space, refreshments and also staff expenses.

COVID has meant that staff have been working virtually from home and we have saved some money from the mileage expenses. This has allowed us to offer more workshops, more flexibility and advice surgeries to communities, as well as young people, parents/carers and professionals.

We have also been looking at how we may be able to generate some income from alternative sources, and have been engaged in a dialog with EAS consortium, and the LA about possible options.



Section 6: Exit Plan

Exit plan	
Strengths	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We are a statutory service and have excellent links with professionals, services in health education and social care and parents & developing a service with YP ➤ Service is valued by service users, local authority and professional colleagues as confirmed by ongoing feedback, both formal and anecdotal ➤ Strong & established referral pathway. ➤ Expert knowledge across health education and social care, legal requirements and services available to parents & YP. ➤ Well known by families and services alike - good network of professionals confidently recommend us to families, good reputation ➤ Well trained staff with in depth knowledge of SENDIAS and support services to refer on to ➤ High level of trust from service users –maintained trust over the years ➤ Skilled at supporting and empowering families ➤ Strong mediation skills which help to reduce escalation of issues to the benefit of all involved ➤ Case work model – works more effectively with families; doing individual pieces of work and not case holding. Parent & YP groups – forums which feed into a culture of continuous improvement ➤ Put the young person at the centre of our work ➤ On strategic boards in LA, identify gaps in service provision for families and their children across health, education and social care, our position allows us to raise as strategic issues. Well connected to Voluntary Action Network, and also to a large number of community groups which strengthens the trust of future self-referring families and young people and assists in overcoming initial stigma, language and cultural barriers. Well connected to the LA's Safeguarding Forum and the Parent Forum, as well as PESTS, Contact and Log Cabin, Mencap



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Involvement in strategic boards/ work streams helps raise the profile of the service. Allows us to feed back views of parents and YP to contribute to SEND developments. ➤ Impartial & well respected as knowledgeable in SEND Legislation. Being impartial assists in developing positive relationships with other professionals involved with the families and support better 3 way dialogue (please refer to our new professionals survey in Ealing, measuring these criteria). ➤ Up to date and feed into national and local consultations re change – national authority?! ➤ Impartial in terms of being commissioned outside of local authority – seen by families as a professional support not influenced by LA ➤ We have excellent working relationship with commissioners, LA and Parent Carer Forum (Ealing Parent Carer Forum EPCF) ➤ Local knowledge, valued in schools evident by the number of SENCO contacting services. Additional to this we are invited at SENCo's and Inclusion managers meetings, which supports better working relationship with the SENCos in our LA and proactive work in referral pathways ➤ Good at mediation in meetings, especially with families in conflict over young peoples choices ➤ Based centrally, easily accessible. The location and accessibility to our offices in Ealing is : suitable for wheelchair users, located near local high school, youth centre and in same building as 3 other services working with carers and also in the field of SEND, including EAS (Ealing Advice Consortium). ➤ Use of appropriate and very secure IT, also virtual platforms and developed social media and website ➤ Diverse background of staff with varied language skills
	<h3>Weaknesses</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Regarded as separate from family support services due to SEND legislation and as advice. ➤ Not recognised for supporting families emotionally and practically like family support workers ➤ Level of expertise not always acknowledged ➤ Don't promote ourselves and skills enough – more networking at all levels is needed ➤ Understaffed for scope of support and advice provided – a growing area of concern as services experience further cuts



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Don't link up enough with existing Family Action services and knowledge. Need to – again networking internal and externally organised and made part of induction ➤ We can't apply for small pots of funding as national big budget charity. Need more support from head office to apply for big funding pots. There is a big potential and identified needs in our area of various small projects, for which the service has the skills to deliver but is restricted by cuts in funding, casework hours being cut and barriers to access and apply for further smaller grants and funding other than from the LA. ➤ Can be more reactive than proactive, (due to lack of funding) ➤ Training is both time consuming and expensive ➤ Training and building the capacity of volunteers has been also time consuming and once team is significantly overstretched due to funding cuts, volunteers -in danger of disengaging. ➤ Once involved with families we have difficulty detaching and closing cases, understandably parents/ young adults expectations are of a continuous service provision ➤ Improved languages and diversity of front line staff, but still necessary to use more interpreter services – costly ➤ Not as much empowering as we would like to see ➤ Need to improve advertising and recruitment so right staff are in post
	<h3>Opportunities</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop volunteering work e.g. parent champions going into communities and promoting service and knowledge of education system OR parent befrienders to offer families long-term practical and emotional support. Parent Champions continue to be also a part of our future plans and has been thus far good way of outreaching to diverse communities where language and culture barriers are present. ➤ Opportunity to widen the IAS remit & offer additional & complimentary SEND services. ➤ Young people – recruit young people to be buddies for SEND YP and help them get out and about access social activities, college open days etc. Peer support for YP is excellent way of developing the service remit and identified need for our area. Possibilities for support at transitions, building up further independent living skills, overcoming barriers to access mainstream activities and increased inclusion. ➤ Secret shoppers- volunteer parents and young people to visit services and report how ASC or SEND accessible ➤ Transition support for young people – travel training, life skills, building up employability skills ➤ Development of support/parenting groups for parents with specific challenges in common eg ASD, ADHD



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Siblings and ASC specific YP groups ➤ Development of events to extend reach and make information and support more accessible e.g. SEND events, workshops around School Support, EHC assessments, specific diagnoses, developing confidence (Getting Your Voice Heard), mental health issues for YP ➤ Further develop professional networks by doing regular presentations about the work of the service e.g. schools, support services, voluntary groups ➤ Embracing new ways of working – joint working opportunities ➤ Creating even better links with local colleges where students welcome the opportunity to volunteer as part of their course remit
	<h3>Threats</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Loss of trained paid staff – new staff & champions or volunteers need a lot of training & a certain aptitude to be able to work within IAS effectively. Massive loss of trained and experienced staff. ➤ Securing further funds, bidding for it and developing new sustainable smaller projects can be time consuming and difficult for understaffed service, where hours of casework have been cut. ➤ Volunteer projects rely upon quality of volunteers, number of volunteers not always stable – volunteers are hard to train and get up to a certain level of knowledge before they can actively support families. Strong SEND knowledge and needed skills take considerable time to develop and it needs to be very careful and well targeted recruitment of volunteers as their commitment can be vary variable. ➤ Safeguarding risks of volunteer projects and overall responsibility of managing/training volunteers – additional costs/time ➤ Volunteer projects could be better resourced than actual SENDIAS service itself, volunteers that don't feel well supported due to stretch in services would disengage ➤ Other charities are bidding for same type of work ➤ Duplication from other SEND charities ➤ Competition from other third sector organisation who had IS funding in each LA ➤ Funding cuts by local authorities – and our response to those cuts ➤ Expanding the remit & diversifying the SENDIAS service may lose the IAS element & weaken its place as statutory IAS in the community.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ More independent SEND Information services set themselves up to meet demand, but are adversarial & charge families extortionate fees for limited knowledge & poor service. ➤ Need to be mindful of too much diversification which could move services away from the core remit. We currently have to regularly remind professional partners (and ourselves!) that we are not family support workers ➤ Other services that offer a more Family support type intervention in addition to SENDIAS info/advice work and seen as more attractive. ➤ We identified that the risks associated to a change of service would be less direct work with young people and this would adversely impact upon our current service development working with young people. Attendance at fewer education meetings would also be a risk associated with losing the IASP funding.
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Section 7: Action Plan

Area of focus	Developed in funding period – what have you developed under the IASP funding	Sustained activity – what are your continuing and what actions are required.
Engaging directly with children and young people	<p>Increased direct work with YP</p> <p>Young people reported that they have received clear information about what the service offers</p> <p>Young people factsheets, resources were developed</p> <p>YP video finalised</p> <p>YP new flyer created</p> <p>YP weekly advice surgeries implemented</p> <p>YP sessions delivered</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue to work directly and outreached to more young people ➤ Continue to attend events with partner organisations working in the SEND field and young people ➤ Setting up of Family Action YP SENDIAS forum to share best practice between staff ➤ Continue to create new YP resources ➤ To continue to deliver these workshops and advice surgeries using virtual platforms and face to face sessions when this becomes possible. ➤ These will be promoted via Facebook, schools, colleges, nurseries, youth clubs and youth settings, parent and carers forum, Ealing Local Offer, Ealing Local Authority, other local community groups and via other professionals within Ealing.



To develop innovative, accessible resources for children, young people, parents/carers and professionals	<p>Developing of new factsheets for young people, and factsheets for parents and professionals</p> <p>Developing YP page and linking it to Ealing Local offer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue to develop resources for young people, children, parents and professionals. ➤ Promote these with Ealing School improvement partnership, SENAS, Schools and YP settings, SAFE (early help) CCG and other services.
Continue to work towards strengthening the strategic foundation of Ealing ISAID! by working with Health and Social Care professionals and implementing the Advisory Group	<p>Health and Social Care professionals have increased knowledge of SEND processes and legislations by being part of the Advisory Board</p> <p>The advisory members have contributed and reviewed the service development and delivery of ISAID</p> <p>Key education/ health/social care professionals reported that ISAID supported them in achieving best outcomes for the child/young person with SEND</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Continue to hold the Advisory Board and engage key health, social care and education professionals in the Advisory Board. ➤ Continue to widen and build professional networks. ➤ Look at meeting with Social Care to discuss joint commissioning arrangements.

Section 8: Potential Partners and Joint working

As the local authority commissioned IAS service our partners are signposting families to Ealing ISAID as part of the local exit plan. Our local SEND partners support families to self-refer. Support will be via the phone, email, virtual such as Zoom, Teams and face to face appointments once this is possible.

NOTE: IAS do not promote professional referrals to our service, we expect professionals to support families to self refer & will only accept a professional referral in exceptional circumstances.



Ealing ISAID and Ealing Parent and Carers Forum (EPCF) have worked together to meet the needs of families within the local area. We also work jointly with Ealing Contact, Ealing Mencap and PESTS Ealing. We worked with our Ealing ISAID Advisory Board on promoting the joint work of the service.

Our local SEND partners invite our team to joint events, we work with the SEND officer of Ealing Local Offer and Ealing ADHD group. We also attend and present at the EPCF events and co-facilitate any workshops they hold together with Ealing Advice Service Consortium, where our service is a partner. We jointly offer support to young people and their families.

Everything provided by Ealing ISAID and EPCF is free for parents/carers and children and young people. We also at some of the sessions have professionals attend as part of their ongoing development. With the EPCF we organise joint sessions to support communities accessing the SEND process in their own language (as part of our community champions programme that during IASP included Polish, Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, Somali sessions). We also can continue deliver aspects of our work as consortium partner of EAS. The YP work and engagements can be carried over with the support of the Local Offer officer, currently working with our YP caseworker on improving the information for Transition to Adulthood and information on transition to secondary school in Ealing.

Throughout the COVID pandemic, the EPCF, all steering group partners such as Ealing Mencap, PESTS, Contact and Log Cabin and ISAID have met twice monthly to share good practice and discuss any challenges faced. This has also allowed us to jointly feedback to the CCG and LA any areas/gaps families have raised with us in regards to COVID and education, health and social care.

Section 9: The Impact on children/young people with SEND/parents/carers and other stakeholders

The potential risks for SENDIAS provision will be reduced capacity. There may not be capacity to attend all meetings with each family. In this scenario, we will provide more telephone and Zoom/Teams support and offer telephone and other virtual meetings when we are unable to attend.

Stakeholders will be informed of any service changes from March 2021 onwards and will be advised of potential reduced capacity and the need to work less intensively with families, with the likelihood of SENDIAS services having a waiting list.

We have a working partnership with local SEND organisations & strong link to our Ealing Parent Carer Forum and steering group partners and the referral process to SENDIAS is established and local partners are aware of our service.

We receive consistent feedback from families and other stakeholders about the impact of the work we do. Last year there was a 51% increase in families accessing our service.

Some comments received:



- ISAID is a godsend service, as parent I feel I am listened to when I need someone to talk to about my children's educational issues. They are always there to help and make you feel at ease. You don't feel judged and take my views seriously. Overall I am very pleased with the service I always receive from ISAID especially that of XX. She is a very caring and very professional person. Always there to help and answer your questions promptly. You can definitely tell she enjoys her work
- I think ISAID is a brilliant service and have used it before. XX was very helpful and helped me understand how to approach school SENCO
- X was very professional, empathic and swift in her response. She always makes me feel confident that I can advocate for my son's needs even when I think there is no solution in sight. Her support is immensely appreciated.
- what can i say, i would be so lost alone with the ongoing support from isaid, i have been with you since 2015 and would of not of got this far without your input and support towards myself and my daughter, you are all amazing and as carers can feel alone they are well supported by isaid. many thanks for your ongoing support from ISAID.

In addition:

- 100% of professionals and parents attending a session stated that the session enabled them to learn something new about the SEND process (with 86% stating that they strongly agree and further 14% responded with agree)
- 100% of the professionals responding to the survey stated that Ealing ISAID service helped them achieve better outcomes for the child or young person (and the family) they are working with (with 77% stating that they strongly agree and a further 23% responding with agree)

Considering legacy matters:

The following resources have been developed as part of IASP funding across Family Action SENDIAS services. All of these remain relevant and are kept on a shared drive on our database. All resources will be revised and amended on an ongoing basis.:.

- Easy read young peoples forms
- Young People factsheets (Exclusion, Transition to a new school, Top tips when visiting a school)

Workshop materials for:

- SEN support



- SEND Code of Practice and EHCPs
- Resources for parents with children with SEND
- The Local Offer
- Exclusions
- School transitions
- Naming a school on EHCP
- Questions to ask school and SENCO High School
- Annual Review
- Health Factsheet
- SEND transport
- Choosing a new school with or without EHCP
- Preparing for Adulthood for parents and professionals
- Preparing for Adulthood for Young People

Videos and animations:

- Young people video
- Community champion video
- ISAID promotional video

Considering the team/staff of Ealing ISAID service:

We will seek advice from our HR department before discussing anything with our staff team. In supervisions, discussions have begun regarding staff changes with the potential end of IAS current funding. Staff will be informed of changes in line with LA procedures.

Our IAS staff are on temporary contracts and are already aware that their contract ends 31st March subject to renewed or additional funding. Transparency concerning impending changes is important to managing change within a team. Our staff are currently being supported and will continue to be supported through open discussions and sharing information about any funding updates. Staff ideas for continued funding have been welcomed and acted upon where appropriate. If staff decide to leave before the end of the contract, case loads will be spread amongst the team and where appropriate volunteers will add capacity to the service.

Section 10: Financial strategy and Contract Matters

We have discussed the IASP funding ending 31st March 2021 operational manager and ISAID's Advisory Board. The service manager will be meeting with our local authority commissioner and Deputy Director for Services and Innovation to discuss options post IAS funding and the following action plan once it has been agreed.



The fundraising team will research funding opportunities regarding the following identified work in the Action Plan. If any funding opportunities are suitable the senior management will decide which bids, if any, to apply for.

- A focus on young people with additional needs but without a EHCP
- Direct engagement and work of the service to support young people with SEND
- If any suitable funding bids are available, we will have a meeting with the fundraising team to check bid progress and all data from services required is collate.
- Our finance team are kept briefed on exit strategy and potential funding plans and are copied into relevant emails.
- Actions are taken to ensure a final invoice is raised by your finance department no later than 7 April 2021.

As a commissioned IAS service the exit process will be smooth because our remit covers supporting the SEND Processes and EHCP work with families and young people. Any families supported through IASP funded staff will continue to receive support. However the impact of increased self-referrals and complexity, will need to be taken into consideration. When addressing this with commissioner, particular emphasis will be given that the funding ensured increased capacity of casework and CYP direct work, that will be challenging to be retained. As such, management reports will be submitted within the deadline and commissioner kept informed.

Section 11: Health pandemic COVID- 19

Family Action Coronavirus Group provides advice to all of our services. Ealing ISAID follows the government guidance, The NHS advice on the pandemic and the COVID 19 service risk assessment is coordinated with the Coronavirus Group and our Commissioner in Ealing.

During the pandemic Ealing ISAID follows the advice issued locally by the NHS. They are responsible for health planning in our locality. This information and service risk assessments, as well as staff risk assessments are all kept up to date and updated when the advice changes.

Family Action will also issue regular advice to all staff about the condition based on the national NHS advice. This contains all the best advice on how to prevent the illness as much as you can, and what to do if you get it. This information is updated regularly and placed on the intranet, as well as given additional instructions to managers on how to support the teams.

Section : Final Comments

All staff at Ealing ISAID are committed to ensuring the service continues to deliver excellent standards and quality support. By embracing the changes this year, we have been able to work smarter and we have had to become more effective with resources.

Though we may be unable to retain staff without funding, we hope that, with the actions outlined above, we will be able to continue progressing the service and improving outcomes for children and young people.

