

Information Sharing to Tackle Violence (ISTV)

Summary:

The [Information Sharing to Tackle Violence \(ISTV\)](#) programme is part of the government's commitment to reduce knife, gun and other violent forms of crime. The NHS can play its part in injury prevention and in protecting the local community by sharing non-confidential patient information about violent crimes from A&E admissions. By doing so, this will allow the police to target crime hotspots with effective measures to reduce the number of violent offences.

Key points:

- A&E departments across England will collect and share information related to violent crime injuries with local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) allowing local police to target hot-spots with effective measures to reduce violent crime,
- The CSPs are local statutory bodies made up of representatives from the police, local authorities, fire and rescue authorities, probation service and health workers. CSPs will act as the local link between the NHS and the Police and will collate data provided by emergency departments and then share this information with the local police constabularies.
- In September 2014 the [Health and Social Care Information Centre](#) published an Information Standards Notice for ISTV. This formal standard of information sharing was sponsored by the Department of Health and will ensure that information sharing is fully compliant with the [Data Protection Act](#) and actively supported by the [Information Commissioner's Office](#).
- The Information Standards Notice was developed with the National College of Policing, Association of Chief Police Officers, Public Health England, College of Emergency Medicine and NHS England. The Department of Health is overseeing and sponsoring the implementation of the standard during 2015.
- Accident and Emergency departments (A&Es) can therefore play a vital role in violence prevention by sharing the key data specified in the ISTV Information Standards Notice on time and date of incident, time and date of arrival to A&E, specific location of incident and primary means of assault (i.e. weapon or body part used).

Background:

Studies from the UK and Denmark have shown that only between 25% and 30% of assaults that lead to medical treatment are reported to the police. The ISTV programme and work from the College of Emergency Medicine has evidenced that by improving the information available to the police and other services they can plan more effective interventions to prevent violence occurring or reduce its severity.

This has been demonstrated by the work of the Cardiff Violence Prevention Programme (in operation since the 1990s) which indicates that adopting this approach of information sharing could reduce the severity of injuries and A&E attendances resulting from violent incidents by approximately 35%.

Data sharing between health services to support crime reduction has been happening across a range of local places; however this has not been implemented consistently. The Department of Health sponsored the development and publication of the ISTV Information Standards Notice in September 2014 to support local places to commence their information sharing journey and support a reduction in violent crime.

The implementation guidance published alongside the ISTV information standards notice highlights the importance of:

- Mainstreaming the collection and sharing of relevant data and information
- Encouraging staff to share relevant data to support violent crime prevention
- Understand the requirements of local CSPs when sharing relevant data and information.

Further information:

- The Centre for Public Health published five [case studies](#) on optimising the use of NHS intelligence in local violence prevention and measuring its impact on violence. These case studies were part of a project funded by the Department of Health and include learning points for local areas that are embarking on this process.
- [The Cardiff Violence Prevention Programme](#)
- [The Information Standard to Tackle Violence \(ISB 1594\) and associated implementation guidance](#)