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**Child Development Information System: The linchpin of reform and the gateway to access.**

**Abstract**

Just over three years ago a decision was made to establish a single metropolitan Child Development Service, signalling the commencement of a major reform process aimed at delivering accessible and equitable services to children and families. The Child Development Information System (CDIS) was the linchpin of the reform process and the mechanism through which clinical practice has been consolidated for improved client services.

Historically, individual CDS sites used a variety of un-linked electronic and paper-based record management systems which precluded any attempts at integrated planning, service delivery and information management. CDIS was developed with extensive input from CDS staff to ensure that the system meets both the clinical and business needs of the Service.

CDIS has been implemented across the CDS and is used by over 250 clinicians and support staff. The diagram below outlines the inputs and outputs able to be derived from CDIS.

As well as standardising and greatly enhancing client record management across the Service, CDIS:

- streamlines and enhances administrative procedures and reduces the administrative burden across the services;
- improves service delivery through more consistent and efficient wait-list management and through automated client/referrer follow-up and feedback;
- facilitates integrated multidisciplinary services through improved access to clinical information and assists with caseload management;
- supports work processes by enabling clinicians to enter assessment and treatment information and develop reports;
- enables monitoring of clinical outcomes including recording assessment tool results and the use of clinical codes such as the ICD 10 AM;
- enables ongoing data collection and reporting on client characteristics and services delivered across the CDS, for the first time providing reliable, service-wide data to facilitate service planning and to enable evaluation, benchmarking and research;
- improves flexibility and access to services through coordinated scheduling across all sites.

A demonstration of the functionality of CDIS is available at:

<http://www.dracomputing.com/Products/ChildDevelopment/Pages/Default.aspx>