

11<sup>th</sup> February 2015

**To All Directors of Children's Services  
and Chief Executives of Adoption Agencies**

Dear colleague,

**Achieving best practice in matching children and adopters: the leadership challenge – A series of regional roundtable events**

**Purpose and focus**

The College of Social Work (TCSW) is organising, on behalf of the National Adoption Leadership Board, a series of six roundtable events across England to focus on achieving best practice in matching children and adopters. This letter provides summary information about these events. You are asked to **agree with your senior managers how your agency will be represented at one of these roundtable events.**

The events have been expressly designed to focus on the leadership challenges in achieving best practice. You are invited to identify **three people from your organisation to attend one of six regional roundtable events (details below).** This will normally include the relevant Assistant Director, Principal Social Worker and a manager who has a particular leadership role in relation to adoption.

The roundtable events will:

1. Engage social work leaders in critical analysis and reflection on current policy and practice about matching. There will be opportunities to review available practice and research evidence about how adoption agencies can take appropriate and timely decisions about adoptive placements for children.
2. Identify and address system, attitudinal, and practice barriers that may inhibit child centred and flexible approach to matching children with adoptive families.
3. Support local areas, regional adoption boards and the National Adoption Leadership Board to identify necessary practice, policy and organisational changes

Speakers at the events will include Sir Martin Narey (Chair of National Adoption Leadership Board), Isabelle Trowler (Chief Social Worker), Professor Julie Selwyn (University of Bristol), John Simmonds (BAAF), Mark Owers (CVAA) and Annie Hudson (TCSW).

**Why focus on matching?**

Annual data shows that overall adoption timeliness is improving; the speed of matching is also improving, albeit at a less rapid rate. We know too that some groups of children

are likely to wait for longer to be matched. Social work agencies have a clear responsibility to find the most appropriate home for children, however, there is evidence that the matching process can often be complex and lengthy and that sometimes there is a search for the 'perfect match' and this can create unnecessary delay.

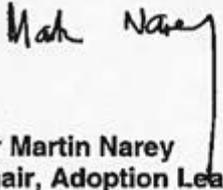
## Dates and Venues

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Region</i>	<i>Venue</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> March 10.00- 3.15	London	South East, East and London	The Wesley, 81-103 Euston Street, London NW1 2EZ
9 <sup>th</sup> March 10.00- 3.15	Leeds	North East and Yorkshire & Humberside	Aspire, 2 Infirmary Street, Leeds, LS1 2JP
19 <sup>th</sup> March 10.00- 3.15	Birmingham	East and West Midlands	Menzies Birmingham City Strathallam, 225 Hagley Road, Birmingham, B16 9RY
23 <sup>rd</sup> March 10.00- 3.15	Manchester	North West	Manchester Conference Centre, Sackville Street, Manchester M1 3BB
25 <sup>th</sup> March 10.00- 3.15	Taunton	South West	Taunton Racecourse, Orchard Portman, Taunton, Somerset, TA3 7BL
1 <sup>st</sup> April 10.00- 3.15	London	South East, East and London	The Wesley, 81-103 Euston Street, London NW1 2EZ

**Action requested**

Please arrange for the attached form to be completed and returned to [emma.burgum@tcsw.org.uk](mailto:emma.burgum@tcsw.org.uk) , indicating which event your colleagues will be attending, along with their names, designation and contact details. If you are unable to attend the date for your region, you can attend on another day.

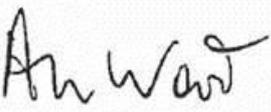
Yours sincerely



**Sir Martin Narey**  
**Chair, Adoption Leadership Board**



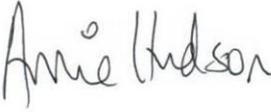
**Isabelle Trowler**  
**Chief Social Worker, Children and Families**



**Alan Wood - President, ADCS**



**Mark Owers**  
**CEO, CVAA UK and ALB Manager**



**Annie Hudson - Chief Executive, TCSW**