

20 April 2026

## **Practice of Linking Birth Relative Counselling Records to the Adopted Person's Adoption Record**

I am seeking information on the practice of linking birth relative personal post adoption counselling records to the adopted persons adoption record. The following requests relate to personal counselling provided to birth relatives as a result of a direct approach from that individual seeking personal counselling and/or mental health support with the personal impact of a past reunion.

### **1/ Any policy, directives, or instructions regarding linking personal support or counselling records of birth relatives and non adopted persons to the adopted person's adoption record.**

*In respect of the information requested, any support provided to birth relatives because of an approach being made or a reunion occurring, is recorded in a separate file to that of the adoptee.*

*A social worker within post adoption service can check through a record system that Belfast Trust Adoption Service maintains to establish if a birth relative has been in contact regarding an adoptee or if an adoptee has been in contact about a birth relative.*

*No other information would be known beyond this, unless the file is accessed for purpose of providing a service.*

*Only a social worker from the post adoption team within the Trust can access this, and they would only do so if they are providing a service to either adoptee or birth relative.*

### **2/ Any policy or documents explaining the reasoning for linking a non adopted birth relative's personal counselling to the adopted persons adoption record.**

NA – please see above response

### **3/ Any documented procedures, consent forms, or agreements, used by social workers to inform the individual prior to using the service that their personal counselling notes will be linked to the adopted person's record.**

NA – please see above response



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**4/ Any policy or procedures regarding how the personal counselling record of a birth relative/non adopted person is linked to the adopted persons adoption record. For example, are they linked directly by reference number, electronically? In the case of historical records, how was this link created.**

NA - please see above response