



CLEARmark: Care Leavers Enhancing Access to Records

"I'm grateful to the Care Leavers Association for their great work supporting young people who are making the transition from care to independent living. Young people leaving care can be particularly vulnerable to exclusion which is why I am committed to making sure public services meet their needs. I hope that this year's National Care Leavers Week will help raise awareness of the challenges that care leavers face and I welcome the Care Leavers Association new Access to Records Quality Mark as a positive step forward."

- Kevin Brennan, Minister for the Third Sector and Social Exclusion

On 31st October 2008, the Care Leavers' Association launched **CLEARmark**, its new quality mark for access to records. The **CLEARmark** will be awarded to local authorities and voluntary agencies who display good practice in this area.

To achieve the quality mark a local authority or voluntary agency has to meet each of the following seven criteria:

1. Advertise the right for care leavers to access their records in at least one type of media, which might be: a webpage; a flyer; a poster or an advert in a local newspaper.
2. Have a statement of recognition that care leavers have a right to this information.
3. Recognise the positive importance of accessing files
4. Have an ATR policy that is publicly available.
5. Have a monitoring system on requests received and responses made (or to be demonstrably working towards such a system).
6. Provide a brief and accessible response letter and leaflet to encourage care leavers to see the process through
7. Monitor the effectiveness of the service through use of an evaluation form