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### NAGALRO AUTUMN 2024 ONLINE CONFERENCE

**‘Post-Adoption Contact: Changes and Constants’**

Friday, 4 October 2024, 9.30 am – 1.30 pm

This year will see the publication of the President’s Public Law Working Group (Adoption Sub-Group) Best Practice in Respect of Adoption Report together with its Best Practice Guidance. Chapter 1 deals with adoption and contact and is likely to have the most immediate impact on practice. The sub-group has identified that all the necessary statutory framework for greater flexibility around post-adoption contact is already in place and the research supporting a more bespoke solution for the individual child has already been done. For all professionals, the urgent need will be to understand what has changed and what stays the same. The Adoption Sub-Group’s interim report pointed out the essential nature of training to ensure that all relevant professionals understand the issues and options for children and are ready for the implementation of the recommendations for best practice. The shift in emphasis will affect social workers, adoption agencies, voluntary adoption agencies, lawyers and judges.

This conference aims to ensure that delegates are fully aware, not only of the changes but also of the essential constant – the paramount importance of the welfare of the child throughout their life.

**Chair of the Conference: Conference Chair and Keynote Speaker:**

**The Hon Mrs Justice Judd DBE KC** - a former Chair of the Family Law Bar Association and is the Chair of the Public Law Working Group’s Adoption Sub-Group.

Speakers will include:

**Professor Beth Neil**: Professor Neil’s research into children and adoption is at the foundation of many of the proposed reforms. She will explain what the research tells us about post-adoption contact, when it is appropriate and when not, what can the benefits be and what forms can benefit the child.

**Dr Tam Cane and Dr Sushir Puhan**: The contact needs of transracially adopted children and how we can maintain the ethnic and cultural heritage of the child without damaging the security of the adopted family.

**Shelagh Beckett**: The contact needs of siblings when they cannot be placed together or where only some are adopted.

**Dr Mandi MacDonald:** Based at Queen’s University Belfast, Dr MacDonald has conducted extensive research on post-adoption contact, the experiences of adoptive parents and their support needs. The experiences of adopted children in Northern Ireland where some form of post-adoption contact is much more common and whose practices informed the Public Law Working Group’s recommendations.

**Cathy Ashley**: Chief Executive of Family Rights Group will discuss the role which may be played by extended family members to support the child in their adoptive family.

**Arc Adoption NE:** Arc will demonstrate their ARCBOX digital communication management app, showing how ‘letterbox’ contact can be brought into the digital age. Arc will also answer questions about their solution.

The Conference will attract 4 CPD hours and be of interest to social workers, barristers, solicitors, family court advisers, children’s guardians, family support workers, academics, and mediators, judges, administrators, magistrates, mental health workers, researchers and IROs.

Nagalro conference on Friday 4 October 2024

**‘Post-Adoption Contact: Changes and Constraints;**

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Application forms to be returned to [nagalro@nagalro.com](mailto:nagalro@nagalro.com)

Please note that numbers are limited. No refunds due to cancellation can be made after 29 September 2024 and all applications for refund are subject to a small administrative charge.

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