

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

When the hospital contacts Children's Social Care

As a Trust we have a legal duty to protect and promote the welfare of all children and young people and follow both national and local inter-agency guidance when doing so.

This means that sometimes we contact Children's Social Care (Social Services) about children, young people, or unborn babies we are concerned about.

This is done for several reasons:

- If we think that parents or carers would benefit from support in caring for their children.
- If we think the health and welfare of a child/unborn child is at risk.
- We cannot find a reasonable explanation as to how a child or young person has been injured or become ill.

Before we contact Children's Social Care we will tell you (and your child if they can understand) and explain why we are doing so. In some exceptional circumstances (to protect your child) we will not tell you, but this is rare.

We will always aim to be honest and open with you and seek your agreement for any of our actions.

We act in good faith to protect children and we are allowed, if necessary, to act without your consent.

What happens next?

Children's Social Care has a legal duty to make enquiries to decide whether they need to take action to safeguard and promote the welfare of your child.

If your child has been admitted to a ward whilst they are making these enquiries, they may put certain restrictions in place, such as:

- Say who can or cannot visit your child in the hospital or arrange for visiting to be supervised.
- Specific visiting is supervised by a social worker.

Depending on how serious the concerns are they may also involve the police.

We will ensure that you clearly understand any restrictions that have been put in place by Children's Social Care within the hospital. We will expect you to follow them.

It may also become necessary to undertake additional medical investigations to try and understand what has happened to your child (although these will always be kept to a minimum).

We will ensure that you are told what investigations are required and why.

Information sharing and confidentiality

All organisations that work with children share information with each other when a child's safety is at risk.

We will ensure that information we share about your child is accurate, up to date and necessary for the enquiries being made. We will share it securely and only with those who need to know.

What if I have any questions?

Your child's consultant, nurse, or your midwife is available to answer any questions you may have. So are the social workers within Children's Social Care.

The social worker working with you will also be able to explain in detail what actions Children's Social Care may take to help and support you and your child.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns, or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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