

Trust policies

Child Visiting

**This policy applies to Mental Health
and LD**

Document control page

Policy number	Prof/Prac/R/021
Name of policy	Child Visiting Policy
Names of linked procedures	Child Visiting Procedure Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy What to do if you are Worried a Child is Being Abused Procedure Cleaning Standards Policy Policy for Searching Patients
Accountable Director	Chief Nurse/Director of Operational Clinical Services
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Status (draft/ ratified)	Ratified
Ratifying Committee/ date	Audit Committee August 2018
Review date	August 2021
Brief description of changes following review	Minor changes
Equality Impact Assessment	The Trust aims to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, population and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others. This Policy has been Equality Impact Assessed and does not discriminate.

Version control

Version number	Development Timeline	Date
Version 1		Nov 2007
Version 2		Sept 2008
Version 3		March 2012
Version 4		22 April 2015
Version 5		28 April 2015
Version 6	Ratified by Audit Committee	August 2018

Contents Page

		Page
1	Introduction	4
2	Purpose	4
3	Development	5
4	Definition of Key Terms	5
5	Duties	5
6	Monitoring compliance	7
7	References (legislation and guidance from other organisations)	8
8	Associated documents	8
Appendices	(If applicable)	8

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy sets out the requirements for Trust staff that have to plan and manage visits by children and their families to all service users, whether they are detained or informal. This will include visiting arrangements to the CAMHS in-patient facility, Adult Mental Health, Forensic Services, Later Life and Memory Services, Learning Disability Services and Outpatient Services
- 1.2. Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on health organisations and their staff, not only to safeguard but also to promote the welfare of unborn infants, children and young people. This policy takes account of the broader definition of safeguarding not only to prevent significant harm but to promote wellbeing.
- 1.3. The Policy must be read in conjunction with the Trust Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedure, the Mental Health Act Policy, the Age Appropriate Admissions Policy and Procedure and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board Procedures for Halton, Knowsley, St Helens, Warrington, and Wigan
- 1.4. As defined by the Children Acts of 1989 and 2004, 'a child is anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday'. Therefore the term 'children' as used throughout the policy means children and young people. Consideration must be given to the unborn infant of pregnant visitors.
- 1.5. This includes children who visit parents or close adult family members receiving inpatient services. Children may also be receiving inpatient services and therefore includes visits by siblings. All visits will be assessed and managed on a case by case basis subject to risk assessment.

2 Purpose

- 2.1 A visit by a child or young person must only take place following a decision by the Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT) that such a visit is in the best interests of the child. Decisions to allow visits must be reviewed at each request and a risk assessment carried out as to whether it would be safe to do so.
- 2.2 A decision can be made not to allow the child visit and a robust rationale would need to be given to the family and the service user and recorded in the case file and on the electronic clinical system.

2.3 Consideration needs to be given in relation to specific visits by 16 to 17 year olds being unaccompanied eg: if they are married to the service user or in a long standing relationship.

2.4 Consideration would need to be given to any additional requirements the child or accompanying adult may have in relation to religion, culture or disability.

3 Development

This policy was developed in line with the procedure for the development and ratification of policy and procedure and is in line with all national and local policy, guidance and recommendations for safeguarding children and adults

All relevant stakeholders were consulted during the development of this policy.

4 Definition of Key Terms -

4.1 Child

4.1.1 The Children Act 2004 stipulates that a child is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.

4.2 Safeguarding

4.2.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

5 Duties

5.1. Visitors

5.1.1. The staff member who is tasked by the MDT with arranging the child visit must inform the service user and the visiting adult, that children and young people under the age of 18 years must not be left unaccompanied when visiting Trust premises and must remain with a responsible adult. This information will be made available on the visiting leaflet. (Appendix 1)

- 5.1.2. The MDT will decide whether 16 to 18 year olds may attend for regular visits. If the level of risk increases, the Nurse in Charge would contact the On Call Manager to inform them of the current situation and allow the original decision to be changed.
- 5.1.3. In individual cases the Person in Charge must contact the On-Call Manager to support the decision of a visit by an unaccompanied 16 to 18 year old, for e.g. if the young person is married to the service user.
- 5.1.4. If a member of staff has concerns in relation to an increase in the level of risk posed, they must inform the Nurse in Charge. The Nurse in Charge can then escalate this to the MDT or On Call Manager (out of hours)
- 5.1.5. Visitors to the CAMHS In-Patient facility may include family and friends. This must be agreed by the MDT and the person(s) with parental responsibility or the Local Authority for Looked After Children (LAC).
- 5.1.6. Children and family members who attend for an unannounced visit will be subject to the same process outlined in the above section. This may result in the child visit being refused by the MDT

5.2. Family Rooms

- 5.2.1. Designated visiting rooms must be available with a view to avoiding unnecessary or inappropriate contact between the child and service users other than the person whom the child is visiting.
- 5.2.2. The visiting room must be located off the main clinical area. Visiting children and young people must not be taken onto the clinical area of the wards.
- 5.2.3. Service Users and their visitors must be encouraged to utilise the visiting room. A booking system is in operation through the ward staff.
- 5.2.4. If the service user chooses to have a visit with their child (ren) and family in a separate area elsewhere on the premises or off site, then the risk factors must be considered.

5.3. Facilities

- 5.3.1 The Trust supports and encourages infant feeding.
- 5.3.2 Any toys will need to be brought in by the adult accompanying the child.
- 5.3.3 The rooms will be cleaned as per the Trust Cleaning Standards Policy and the Infection Prevention and Control Policy

5.3.4 Soiled nappies to be disposed of in clinical waste bags.

6 Monitoring compliance

Minimum requirements to be monitored	Process for monitoring e.g. audit	Responsible individual, group or committee	Frequency of monitoring	Responsible individual, group or committee for review of results	Responsible individual, group or committee for development of action plan	Responsible individual, group or committee for monitoring of action plan
Safeguarding children and the environmental aspects of child visiting arrangements across the Trust	Audit	Ward Managers / Team Champion	Annually	Safeguarding Children Team	Safeguarding Children Team and Modern Matrons	Safeguarding Governance Group

7 References

Children Act 1989 (HMSO) London.

‘Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families’ (DH et al 2000).

HM Government (2015) Working Together to Safeguard Children – A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers’ (HM Government 2008)

Looked after children: Knowledge, skills and competencies of health care staff. Intercollegiate Role Framework. March 2015

‘National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services’. (Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills 2004) London.

Preventing harm to children from parents with mental health needs (National Patient Safety Agency 2009) NPSA/2009/RRR003.

Royal College of Psychiatrists policy documents including *Patients as Parents and Child Abuse and Neglect: the role of Mental Health Services.*

Social Care Institute for Excellence (2012) Think child, think parent, think family: Final evaluation report. Families and Childrens Services SCIE Report 56.

‘Statutory Guidance on Making Arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children Under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004’ (HM Government 2007).

The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report: A child – centred system (Department for Education 2011)

‘What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused’ (HM Government 2015)

8 Associated documents

- VIP and Celebrity Visitor Policy
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Procedures
- Safeguarding Adult Policy and Procedures
- Child Visiting Policy and Procedure

Appendices (if applicable)



Trust wide Child
Visiting Leaflet.pub