

## Parent/Carer advice sheet

### **Child Protection: The Medical Assessment - A parent and child's guide**

This leaflet is intended to help parents and children understand what a medical assessment is, where it takes place, who you will see and what you can expect.

We understand that it is a difficult time for both parents and children, so read the leaflet carefully and if you can, it is good to talk to your child beforehand about what might happen.

It is important that:

- You understand what is happening.
- You and your child's views are listened to.
- If necessary, you are given help and advised on the best way you and your child can be supported during this time.

#### **What is a medical assessment?**

A children's doctor (Paediatrician) has been asked to check your child for any signs of harm.

This involves the doctor talking to you and your child and examining your child to look for any signs of harm.

#### **Why is this examination necessary and what needs to happen?**

A medical examination has been requested as concerns have been raised about your child.

The investigation will be led by either a social worker or a police officer.

Your child will be examined by a senior children's doctor (Paediatrician) who has special training for this work.

You or your child's permission (known as consent) will need to be given before the examination can take place. Your child can only consent if they are old enough and / or can understand what they are consenting to.

Other children in the family who may be considered at risk may need to be physically examined too.

#### **What happens if I do not agree to the medical examination?**

If you or your child do not give consent to the examination and if the social worker and/or police feel an examination is in your child's best interest, they will discuss this further with you. If they feel

if it's necessary they may seek a court order giving them permission to interview or medically examine your child, without your consent.

If your child is old enough or has enough understanding to give consent, they can do so – the doctor will decide if this is possible.

### **Where does the assessment take place?**

The assessment usually takes place on the Children's Day Unit (CDU Ward 11) at Wycombe Hospital. In certain circumstances it may happen at Stoke Mandeville Hospital either in the Children's Emergency Department leading to the Children's Observation Unit or Ward 3 Children's Ward.

When you arrive in the reception area you will meet the receptionist/nurse. If you introduce yourself, they will let the doctor know that you have arrived.

### **What will happen at the assessment and who will be there?**

A nurse will take your child's details and then take weight and height measurements.

Your child will be seen by a Paediatrician. There may be other people there as well to help with the assessment. All the people involved will introduce themselves to you at the beginning.

Your social worker/police may or may not be there as well.

The doctor will ask you and your child questions about what has happened so far before they check your child for any signs of harm. If you have any questions, you can ask the doctor at the time. The doctor may also speak to the social worker or police officer involved in the case.

Sometimes with older children we will ask you if you are happy that we speak with them by themselves.

The doctor will ask you about:

- Any illness your child has had
- Their birth history
- Their development
- Their immunisations (jabs)
- Any allergies
- Any regular medication
- Their behaviour and progress at school
- Their day to day health
- The family history

Your child will have a full general examination (top to toe). If your child has any obvious injuries, these will be documented, measured and drawn in the child's record. Photographs may be taken of any injuries or wounds but you will be informed and consent taken before any pictures are taken.

More specific investigations/ tests may need to be done. If required, this will be discussed with you at the time.

### What can I bring to the appointment?

- your child's medical records
- your child's favourite toys or books
- a snack or drink for your child
- a list of any concerns or questions you have

### What happens afterwards?

At the end of the assessment the doctor will explain what will happen next, to you and your social worker.

The doctor will then write a report that will be sent to your GP and social services / police. This report and the hospital records may be used as evidence in court if necessary.

#### How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection prevention and control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection prevention & control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. Please follow our infection prevention and control guidelines when visiting our healthcare sites. Further information is available on our website.

#### Parent/Carer Advice Sheet

If you would like a copy of this information on audiotape, in large print or translated, please call the Patient Advice Liaison Service on 01296 831120 or email [bht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:bht.pals@nhs.net)

### Legal Notice

Please remember that this leaflet is intended as general information only. We aim to make the information as up to date and accurate as possible, but please note that it is subject to change. Please therefore always check specific advice on any concerns you may have with your doctor.

Approvals:  
Paediatric Information and Guidelines Group – 11.01.2024  
Paediatric Clinical Governance – 07.01.2024  
CAP –