

Information for patients and carers

**What happens when we have
safeguarding concerns
about your child**

Three horizontal, wavy bands of blue color at the bottom of the page, with the top band being a lighter shade of blue and the bottom band being a darker shade.

Introduction

This leaflet will give you an overview of the safeguarding process we follow to ensure that children in our care are safe where there are concerns about neglect or abuse.

We understand that this can be a worrying time for you, but we will explain everything and listen to you and your child's concerns.

It is very important that you understand what we are doing and why. We hope that this information is helpful so please ask as many questions as you wish. We are here to help.

The Children's Safeguarding Team and all staff at Lancashire Teaching Hospitals are guided by the following key principles:

- Children have the right to be safe and should be protected from all forms of abuse and neglect
- Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility
- It is better to help children and their families as early as possible, before issues escalate and can become more damaging
- Children and families are best supported and protected when everybody works together

What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding is the action that is taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. It is important that people work together to keep children safe.

Safeguarding means

- Protecting children from abuse
- Preventing harm to children's health or development
- Ensuring children grow up safely and well cared for

Why do we safeguard?

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is committed to protecting children and young people from harm, abuse or neglect.

If concerns about your child's safety or welfare have been raised, we have a legal duty to respond to these concerns. Our job is to help work out if there is a reason for those concerns and if we can understand or resolve these by asking you and other agencies for help.

What is our responsibility in safeguarding children?

The Children Act 1989 and 2004 place legal duties on organisations and professionals to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to act where there is a risk of significant harm.

If there is a concern about the safety or welfare of your child, Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust will follow the child protection policies and procedures as set by Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership.

Consent

We will normally seek your consent and involve you in decisions wherever possible.

However, there are situations where we may need to assess or share information without consent if this is necessary to protect your child or another child from harm, or where the law requires us to do so.

We will also make sure you fully understand what is happening with each process and why.

Some children under 16 may be able to make their own decisions about medical care if a health professional believes they understand what is being proposed, why it is needed, and the possible outcome

The process

A children's doctor will take a history of events and may complete a physical examination. The doctor may feel that further tests or photographs are needed to help get a better understanding for our concerns.

If there is a concern about the safety or welfare of your child, we will share our information with Children's Social Care and the Police so, with their support, we can ensure that your child receives the best help or protection needed.

Child protection

Child protection aims to keep children safe where there is a serious risk of harm.

Children's Social Care are always informed if we follow this process as they have a legal duty to investigate child protection concerns.

Child protection medical

A senior doctor may need to complete a 'child protection medical examination' to check for any signs of harm to your child.

If a child protection medical examination is required, you will be provided with further information about this process.

This examination is carried out sensitively, with your involvement wherever possible

Working in partnership to safeguard your child

We understand that it is upsetting to have concerns raised about your child's safety and wellbeing. We always try to work in partnership with parents and carers to offer support. We ask that you cooperate with us, and the other agencies involved, in the best interests of your child.

The rights of the child are:

- To be safe and protected from harm, abuse & neglect
- To be heard and have their views & feelings considered
- To appropriate confidentiality
- To be protected and supported
- To be informed and updated according to their age and understanding
- To ask for explanations and to raise concerns
- To consent or refuse medical examinations as long as they fully understand what is involved
- To have an interpreter if needed
- To have a chaperone

Your rights are:

- To be heard and supported
- To be kept informed and involved
- To ask for explanations and appropriate confidentiality
- To seek legal advice and complain
- To have an interpreter if needed
- To request a chaperone

Looking after & sharing information about your child

In order for us to gather and share information we may contact your child's GP, health visitor, school nurse or other agencies that may be of help.

Our privacy notices, in line with the data protection legislation (GDPR)/Data Protection Act 2018 can be found on the hospital website at: <https://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/privacy-notice>.

Who do I speak to for further information?

This leaflet only gives general information. You can always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the nurse looking after your child and the consultant paediatrician in charge of your child's care.

If you need more information about the child protection process, please contact the social worker allocated to your child's care, if applicable.

Please do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child's treatment. Working in partnership to safeguard your child, we understand that it is upsetting to have concerns raised about your child's safety and wellbeing.

We always try to work in partnership with parents and carers to offer support. We ask that you cooperate with us and the other agencies involved in the best interest of your child.

Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact:

Ward 8: **01772 523496**

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

www.patient.co.uk

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/veteran-aware

<https://bepartofresearch.nihr.ac.uk/>

<https://lancashiresafeguardingpartnership.org.uk/>

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All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals is a smoke-free site. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on any of our premises, either inside or outside the buildings. Our staff will ask you about your smoking status when you come to hospital and will offer you support and advice about stopping smoking this will include Nicotine Replacement Therapy to help manage your symptoms of withdrawal and the opportunity to speak to a nurse or advisor from the specialist Tobacco and Alcohol Care Team.

If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact Smokefree Lancashire on Freephone **08081962638**

Please ask a member of staff if you would like help in understanding this information.

This information can be made available in large print, audio, Braille and in other languages.

Our patient information group review our leaflets regularly, if you feel you would like to feedback on this information or join our reading group please contact on email address:

patientexperienceandinvolvem@LTHTR.nhs.uk

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