

CHILD PROTECTION GUIDANCE

The referral process

- All allegations of abuse or neglect, including anonymous referrals, should be taken seriously.
- Professionals should consider all cases with an open mind.
- All referrals involving allegations of abuse warrant a carefully considered and a measured response.
- Health professionals must be alert to the possibility of abuse of children in families they already know; cases of emotional abuse or physical neglect may not be easy to recognise at the point of referral.
- When a concern relating to the welfare of a child or young person is raised, whether this is a clear allegation of physical or sexual abuse or a more general concern about the possibility of neglect or emotional abuse, professionals must share information with other agencies involved with the child/young person (police, social work and education) before deciding what further action to take.
- No one agency can make this assessment without full information and consultation with others.
- The local authority social work service has the statutory duty to protect children and young people, in partnership with other agencies.

What should I do if I am concerned that a child or young person is “At Risk”?

- **If you have concerns that a young person is at risk, information should be shared with the Young Persons team via the NaSH internal referral system. If concerned please discuss with the team lead, or consultant on call. Do not ‘Q’ the team, as this may not be picked up.**
- Listen carefully and record accurately details of the history and clinical findings (with diagrams) if it is appropriate to perform an examination or you are shown injuries.
- If a child/ young person is suspected of having been sexually abused, a medical examination can be arranged with the specialist child protection unit at Royal Hospital for Children (if not yet reached 13th birthday or for cases of abuse/ assault occurring greater than 7 days from the disclosure). NB if it is an acute sexual assault within the last 7 days and the young person is 13 or older a referral to The Archway can be made (see Archway protocol).
- Tell the young person that you believe him/her and reassure them that what has happened is not their fault.
- Emphasise the seriousness of the situation and the need for it to stop (or for it to be prevented).
- Explain that it is in the interests of their safety and protection that you should share your concerns, and that you would like their consent to do so. Assure them that you will only share information on a need to know basis. It may require several consultations with the young person in order to facilitate agreement of disclosure to relevant services. However if there is immediate ongoing risk to the child/ young person then there should not be any delay in sharing information with the appropriate agencies in the event the child/young person does not consent to it.

- Consult the young person at every stage if possible and explain what you are doing, to what extent their information has been shared and what is likely to happen. The client should remain in control of the situation wherever possible and be part of decisions made about them.
- If you think the case requires **urgent input**, discuss with either the most senior person on **duty at the clinic**, or the relevant **Consultant on-call**.
- If further advice on the situation is required urgently, the case can be discussed with the duty Child Protection Advisor at the Child Protection Unit.
- If there is doubt regarding a situation it is important to consider that other agencies may have additional information which when brought together may indicate a much more serious and definite level of concern. This information may be available from the GP, health visitor etc (The Child Protection Unit may be able to assist you with contact details for other health professionals). The Young Person's team have access to the EMIS system
- If there is a **concern of child protection** the next step is to make a referral to **Social Care Direct** or Duty social work if out of hours.

NHS GGC Policy – Raising a notification of concern (NOC)

If you have concerns regarding the safety of a young person you should raise a NOC. The Child Protection Unit at the QEUH can assist you with this if necessary.

1. When a NOC is raised the person doing so should inform local Social Work Services and/or Police Scotland initially by telephone clearly stating they are raising a possible Child Protection concern. (See appendix for contact details). Even if you feel you are missing important information regarding the young person do not delay submitting the NOC. Additional information can be provided at a later date.
2. If a child or young person is in immediate danger staff should contact Police Scotland on 999.
3. A NOC must be completed and submitted **within 24 hours** following initial telephone call to the local Social Work Service/ Police Scotland where possible. Support, if required, can be sought from their Line Manager and/or the Child Protection Unit (CPS 0141 451 6605).
4. The electronic form should be completed through logging into Clinical Portal, clicking on the "Forms and Pathway" tab then selecting the Child Protection form.

Upon completing the NOC please:-

- Retain one copy in the child's record, i.e. on Portal and/or NaSH.
- Email a copy to Social Work Services (See appendix two).

- Notify CPS Admin Team – either by Email (ggc.cpadmin@nhs.scot) or by telephoning: 0141 451 6605 (providing CHI number).

5. Children and Families Social Work have a responsibility to inform the person making the NOC of the outcome.

- If the situation is concerning stranger abuse (i.e. out with the family), it is the Police (Family Protection Unit) who should be contacted initially (although social work may also be involved).

The young person may not perceive that you are acting in their best interests and you may feel uncomfortable when that young person is angry/ upset.

However, it is important to remember that if information is not dealt with properly and not passed on appropriately then we may be colluding with an abusive situation.

Child Protection Unit

- Provides a range of services including Nurse Advisor advice and support, 24 hour medical advice line (see below) guidelines, policies and procedures, and training.
- Will facilitate Internal Referral Discussions (IRD) which are conference calls to discuss concerns regarding a young person. Included at an IRD are social work and Police. IRDs are the first stage to occur after a NOC is received.

Royal Hospital for Children Child Protection Medical Team

- Consist of a dedicated team of trained medical professionals based at Royal Hospital for Children who can undertake appropriate examination and management of alleged sexual abuse cases for those 12 years and under.
- Clinicians are available to provide advice and support.
- They are based at clinic 14 of the RHC and opening hours are 9-5pm daily. Outwith these hours, contact RHC switchboard and ask for the on-call paediatrician for child protection.

Archway

- A dedicated 24 hour service sexual assault referral centre for acute rape and sexual assault occurring within 7 days prior to referral for people aged 13 years and over – see protocol.

Family Protection Services

- Have been set up in each police division. Each service is specifically set up to deal with sensitive crimes such as sexual assault, domestic and child abuse.

Child Protection Contacts

Concerns about clients who are also caring for children

All of us may work with clients who have responsibility for children. Any member of the team who has reasonable grounds to believe that any child is at risk of physical, sexual and emotional abuse has a duty to ensure that contact with the appropriate social work team is made either directly if immediate risk is suspected, or through the young persons' team.

In some circumstances, there may be an immediate risk to the welfare of the child in which case referral can be made directly to Social Work Services. This should be done after a discussion with the young persons' team or the consultant on call.

In many cases, the family will already be known to social work services, and in such circumstances the concerns should be discussed with the relevant social worker as soon as possible. If such a discussion is to take place, staff will discuss their concerns with the parent/guardian, and inform them of the intention to discuss with social work. If such information was considered to place a child at further risk, then discussion with the social worker can take place without informing the parent/guardian.

Child Protection Training for Sexual Health Staff

Level One

All staff including non-clinical managers should complete Level One training. This can be found on LearnPro Statutory/ Mandatory training section GGC: 006 Public Protection (Adult and child).

Level Two

This is the minimum level required for non-clinical and clinical staff who have some degree of contact with children and young people and/ or parents/ carers.

This can be found on LearnPro CPD section:

- GGC 037: Child Protection Child Sexual Exploitation
- GGC 039: Protecting Scotland's Children
- GGC 040: Child Protection Risk Assessment
- GGC 096: Child Protection Emotional Abuse
- GGC 131: Cultural Issues in Child Protection
- GGC 140: Domestic Abuse – Children's Services
- CEN: Co-ordinating care for CEN – GIRFEC

Level Three

This should be completed by clinical staff who work with children/ young people and/ or their parents/ carers who could potentially contribute to assessing, planning, intervening and evaluating the needs of a child or young person and parenting capacity where there are safeguarding/child protection concerns.

Staff should attend a half day learning event provided by NHSGGC Child Protection Service entitled "Protecting Children –Your Roles & Responsibility". Please see StaffNet for course dates.

References

NHS GGC Child Protection homepage: <https://scottish.sharepoint.com/sites/GGC-PublicProtectionService/SitePages/Child-Protection.aspx>

NHS GGC Child Protection Service. Raising a notification of concern. A Guide for Staff. December 2024 (due review December 2025). Available from:

scottish.sharepoint.com/sites/GGC-PublicProtectionService/SiteAssets/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FGGC-PublicProtectionService%2FSiteAssets%2FSitePages%2FHelp-with-Raising-a-Child-Protection-Notification-of-Concern%2F685463807Guidance-for-Raising-a-Child-Protection-Notification-of-Concern%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FGGC-PublicProtectionService%2FSiteAssets%2FSitePages%2FHelp-with-Raising-a-Child-Protection-Notification-of-Concern [accessed 24 March 2025]

Appendix One: Key Contacts

Service	Contact Details
Consultant Paediatrician for Child Protection	Via RHC switchboard: 0141 201 0000
Archway SARC	Archway, Sandyford Place, G3 7NB. 0141 211 8175
Child Protection Unit	Child Protection Unit Ground Floor Office Block Queen Elizabeth University Hospital 1345 Govan Road Glasgow G51 4TF Telephone: 0141 451 6605
Sandyford Child Protection Lead	Doctor Joanna Speedie (Young Persons' Lead) Inclusion Team Office: 0141 211 8613
Police Scotland	101
Oncall SRH/GUM Consultant	Sandyford Consultants Listed in on call rota By mobile or via QEUH Switchboard 0141 2011000
Childline Scotland	0800 11 11
Strathclyde Rape Crisis Centre	PO Box 53, Glasgow G1 1WE 0141 552 3200

Social Work Services

Typically SW offices are open-

- Monday to Thursday inclusive: 8.45 am - 4.45 pm
- Friday: 8.45 am - 3.55pm

Glasgow City Glasgow Social Care Direct	0141 287 0555
Renfrewshire Paisley Johnstone Renfrew	0300 300 1199 option 1

East Renfrewshire Clarkston Barrhead	0141 577 8300
East Dunbartonshire Kirkintilloch	0141 777 3000
West Dunbartonshire Clydebank Dumbarton/Alexandria	0141 562 8800 01389 608080
Inverclyde Greenock Port Glasgow	01475 715 365 01475 715 270

Outwith these times:

Glasgow and Partners Emergency Social Work Service (**Standby**) on **0300 343 1505**

Appendix Two: NOC Email Address

Please use the below secure email addresses. Please remember to send a copy to the Child Protection Unit ggc.cpadmin@nhs.scot.

Glasgow City	scdchildrenandfamilies@glasgow.gov.uk
Renfrewshire	childrenandfamilies@renfrewshire.gov.uk
East Renfrewshire	
Clarkston	Clarkston.admin@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk
Barrhead	Barrheadadmin@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk
East Dunbartonshire	
Kirkintilloch	childcarestandby.referrals@eastdunbarton.gov.uk
West Dunbartonshire	
Clydebank	clydebank.duty@west-dunbarton.gov.uk
Dumbarton/Alexandria	dumbarton.valeduty@west-dunbarton.gov.uk
Inverclyde	Childcare.Operations@inverclyde.gov.uk