

# Safeguarding Children

## Information for parents and carers

### Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services) or 01271 314090 (for North Devon services). Alternatively, email us at [rduh.pals@nhs.net](mailto:rduh.pals@nhs.net)

The Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Trust (Royal Devon) is committed to safeguarding all children. This means that the Royal Devon staff must do all they can to ensure that children are kept safe in their homes, at school, in hospital and in the wider community.

If a staff member is worried about the care or welfare of a child, they may share those concerns with their line manager or members of the Royal Devon Safeguarding Team and consider making contact with the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Children can also be referred to MASH by people outside of healthcare, including educational settings, Police, or concerned members of the public.

## What is Devon Children's Front Door

The Devon Front Door incorporates our Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), which is Children's Services first point of contact and the start of the child and family's social care journey. The Front Door receives all the requests for early help and safeguarding from people who are worried and concerned for children. The role of MASH is to identify and assess if:

- A child is being harmed, or may be harmed in the future
- A child or their family would benefit from help and support
- A crime has been committed or could be committed in the future

This is done through the sharing of information and intelligence across the safeguarding partnership, such as health, education, Police and probation, to name but a few. This supports them to make informed decisions about how best to progress and support vulnerable children and families.

## What information is shared with MASH?

We are required to share all concerns about children and all relevant information. The amount and type of information that we share will depend on the level of concern. Usually staff will explain to you what our concerns are and the actions we need to take.

We want to assure you that we only share information about the child and family with other professionals who work with children and who are relevant to your child's case.

We may ask for your permission to contact MASH. However, in some cases, information can be shared without your permission if:

- someone has or is being harmed, or may be harmed in the future
- the information may help to stop or solve a crime

## Medical assessment

As part of the process, the MASH team may ask a children's doctor to provide a medical assessment. This involves talking through the reason for the referral and finding out more information about the child's medical and social background. The child will need to be examined, and in some cases the doctor will need to arrange investigations like blood tests or x-rays. The team will do their best to ensure this is as timely and straight forward for children and families as possible.

## What else happens after a referral to MASH?

If the child is thought to have been harmed or could be harmed in the future, they will be referred on to the Children's Social Care team. This team will contact you and tell you what they have to do next. Information will also be given to the Police if it is necessary to help stop or solve a crime.

If the child has not been harmed but they or their family would benefit from extra help, their details may be given to the Early Help team who will be able to provide support and advice about Early Help services.

## How can I find more information?

You can discuss any concerns about this process with a senior paediatric nurse or doctor, or with the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).

You can read the Royal Devon Safeguarding Children Policy – ask a member of staff.

You can find out more about MASH from Devon Safeguarding Children Partnership website at [www.devonscp.org.uk](http://www.devonscp.org.uk)

Remember – if you are concerned about a child or young person in Devon and want to speak to someone, contact MASH on 0345 155 1071.

## PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern, please contact the PALS desk on 01392 402093 (for Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter services) or on 01271 314090 (for North Devon services). Alternatively, email us at [rduh.pals@nhs.net](mailto:rduh.pals@nhs.net)

## Have your say

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

Tell us about your experience of our services. Share your feedback on the Care Opinion website at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk) or freephone 0800 122 3135.

Scan the QR code to visit the Care Opinion website →



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