

## Information for staff

# Child protection is everybody's responsibility

A child is defined as anyone not reaching their 18th birthday. Child abuse can occur in all classes of society, in families and in institutions. It is manifested in different ways from the more obvious forms, such as burns, bites, fractures, etc., to sexual exploitation, neglect, emotional abuse, scapegoating and domestic violence.



There is a responsibility on staff in all agencies and in all settings, and members of the public generally, to report concerns about any child where there is suspicion that they are, or maybe at risk of suffering significant harm.

Within West Suffolk Hospital NHS Trust we pride ourselves on working to the principle of 'Working Together' in order to achieve the best outcomes for the children using the resources, professional skills and knowledge of all agencies working with children and families.

### What is abuse and neglect?

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused within a family, institution or community setting by people that are both known and unknown to them. They may be abused by an adult or another child.

**Physical abuse** may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm, including the fabrication of symptoms or deliberate induction of illness in a child.

**Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved. It may feature inappropriate expectations being imposed, overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another (e.g. domestic abuse) or serious bullying.

**Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child/young person to engage in sexual activities including prostitution, whether or not they are aware of what they are doing. This may be in physical contact, penetrative (e.g. rape, buggery), non-penetrative (e.g. looking at production of pornographic material or by grooming over the internet).

**Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs resulting in the serious impairment of health and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse. Once born, neglect may occur due to failure to provide adequately for a child, protect from harm or danger, supervise adequately, or by not accessing appropriate health care.

If you are worried that a child is being/has been harmed  
**DO NOT DELAY!**

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Safeguarding children is also a concern with children involved in sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, radicalisation and cyberbullying.

Parenting may significantly impact on the wellbeing of a child - if there is domestic abuse, substance misuse, mental ill health or history of being abused as a child themselves, adults may not provide safe and effective parenting to their children.

Child protection training is a core element of your personal development plan. Any staff member having contact with children must attend training. Please discuss with your manager or named personnel which level of training is applicable to your role

**For further detailed guidance, access the Trust Safeguarding Children Policy on the intranet and visit <http://www.suffolkscb.org.uk>.**

### **You may become aware of abuse by:**

- Your own observations
- Being told by another person
- Being told by the child
- The abuser tells you.

### **Discuss this with:**

- Your line manager
- Named/designated professionals
- Children and young people's services
- Police child protection team.

*Continues overleaf*

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## Record

- Date/time/venue of incident
- Observations of the child (injuries, bruises, etc.)
- Any discussions and outcomes
- Sign and print your name.

## Safeguarding children contacts

### **Named professionals - West Suffolk Hospital**

Named doctor:

Dr Ramen Lakshman ext. 3214

Named midwife:

Lana Abbot/Hayley Rowan ext.2995

Named nurse:

Tara Odebrecht ext. 2808

### **Suffolk Children and Young People's Services child protection**

(t) 0808 800 4005

### **MASH professional consultation line**

(t) 0345 6061499

### **For families that live within Norfolk**

All referrals should be made by calling 03448008021

## Useful documents

- Department of Health (2018) "Working Together to Safeguard Children "
- Department of Health (2015) "What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused"
- Trust safeguarding microsite on the intranet.