

**Protocol**

**Children's Hospital Social Work Team  
And  
The Initial Response Service and Long Term Social Work Teams/Units**

Children's Hospital Social Work Team provide a regional Social Work service.

This protocol is in relation to children resident in Newcastle upon Tyne who require Children's Hospital Social Work support.

The Children's Hospital Social Work Team accept referrals in order to assess need and provide support and services to, children their families and cares where the main issues arise from the impact of illness or disability.

The Children's Hospital Social Work Team provide a service to:-

- Children and Young People admitted to any of the three Newcastle Hospitals with a serious illness, requiring a substantial period of inpatient time for treatment or frequent periods of inpatient treatment;
- Children and Young People who suffer from specific complex health problems and who will require a Children's Hospital Social Work service for the duration of the their life or through transition to Adult Services;
- Children under the age of 7 known to the Children's Hospital Social Work Team, living in the community with a permanent and or substantial disability or illness, which has a profound effect on their health, development and social functioning;
- Parents of premature babies receiving care in the Special Care Baby Unit; emotional, social and practical support is provided by a designated hospital Social Worker. Babies identified as having additional needs on discharge home requiring extra support, will remain allocated for a maximum of 6 weeks. If appropriate, prior to discharge a Team around the Family is identified and an Early Help Plan is completed and incorporated in to the discharge plan;
- Bereaved families. The Hospital Social Worker will continue to provide support immediately after a child's death, and if specialist support is required, the Children's Hospital Social Worker will make a referral to the appropriate bereavement resources.

**If the child or young person is allocated to a social worker in the community prior to admission, the children's hospital social worker will work closely with the child's Social Worker and will assume responsibility for issues specifically related to the child's health needs.**

## **Child Protection Concerns**

Where a child protection concern arises in relation to an open case within the Children's Hospital Social Work Team, the Social Worker will make contact with the Initial Response Service to discuss the concerns and identify the most appropriate plan. The Children's Hospital Social Worker will maintain responsibility as the primary social worker, however, the Initial Response Service will lead a joint investigation.

This arrangement will also apply to children or young people receiving inpatient care, who are not ordinarily resident in Newcastle, if a child protection concern occurs within the hospital premises or in Newcastle. Newcastle Initial Response Service will take lead responsibility and lead the enquiries under Section 47.

If the Initial Response Service receive any information relating to the family of a child or young person who is an open case to Children's Hospital Social Work Team, the information will be directed via CareFirst to the allocated Social Worker and Team Manager.

Child Concern Notifications regarding children allocated to the hospital social work team are received by the Initial Response Service and redirected to the allocated Social Work and the Hospital Team Manager.

Updated  
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