



Information for Patients and Carers

Safeguarding infants, children and young people in the Emergency Department

Whenever a health professional identifies a situation that raises the possibility that a child might have been harmed or be at risk of harm, they have a duty to ensure this is looked into to keep the child safe. **This is a legal requirement in the UK.**

Health professionals have a duty to refer for further assessment not only when they are certain that a child has been harmed but also if there is a **possibility** that a child has been or may be harmed.

Examples of when the Emergency Department health professional may have to consider safeguarding include:

- All injuries in babies under 1 year old
- Broken bones or head injuries in young children
- Unexplained bruising or marks to the skin



The Emergency Department health professional may need to examine your child very carefully from head to toe, including in the nappy area for babies. They may also arrange tests or scans if needed and speak to the General Paediatric team (who are specialists in safeguarding children). This team may also need to see your child as well which might mean extra time waiting, especially when the hospital is busy.

If further investigations are needed, the General Paediatric team will be able to explain why and what will happen next. Often, no further investigations are needed. We may still share information with your GP, midwife, health visitor or school nurse if this is helpful or important for your child.

We know that talking about safeguarding when you have brought your child to the Emergency Department can cause considerable anxiety to parents and carers. Our staff will do our best to keep you fully briefed about your child's care and waiting times. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions.



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