

Key updates: please circulate this briefing of updates to relevant colleagues working across safeguarding and child protection as appropriate.

Dear Colleagues,

During these unprecedented and challenging times there is increasing concern about the impact of the pandemic on children and young people and in particular vulnerable young people.

There is emerging evidence that children and their families are not accessing medical advice as soon as needed and concern that the current 'lock down' situation will not only increase child abuse but will also make preventing, detecting and managing it far more difficult.

To provide support for clinicians in their clinical and safeguarding work RCPCH is publishing regularly updated information and guidance which is outlined below.

If you have any concerns or questions please contact the Health Policy team via health.policy@rcpch.ac.uk.

Best wishes and stay safe

Alison

Alison Steele, RCPCH Officer for Child Protection.

RCPCH COVID-19 guidance

RCPCH is providing a range of COVID-19 information and guidance that is updated regularly. This includes:

- **[Guidance for paediatric services](#)**: including **safeguarding, looked after children and vulnerable children processes** across the 4 nations during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- **[Position statement on delayed access to care for children during COVID-19](#)**. This includes a link to a **[poster](#)** for parents and carers to help guide where to access help when their child is unwell or injured.
- The College recognises the impact this crisis is having on paediatricians and other healthcare workers and has introduced a **[Wellbeing hub](#)** that provides links to self-care resources, helplines and wellbeing apps.
- **[Research evidence summaries](#)** and **[how to accurately collect and record data on patients with suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19](#)** using existing surveillance and data collection sources.
- **[Resources for parents and carers](#)**

For further information, or a full copy of the minutes from the latest meeting (March 2020) please contact: health.policy@rcpch.ac.uk

Work of the RCPCH Child Protection Standing Committee

Below is a summary of some of the pieces of work that are currently being discussed and undertaken by the Committee:

- A survey is being developed to find out designated doctor's experience of child criminal exploitation (CCE) and modern slavery.
- A working group will be reviewing the RCPCH position statement on mandatory reporting.
- A range of work around Looked after Children is being carried in liaison with Coram BAAF and other partners.
- A review is being carried out of the Safeguarding SPIN module.
- The RCPCH Peer review in Safeguarding guidance is being updated.
- There is work taking place with FFLM and the RCN around CSA services.
- Work is taking place on haematology pathways with regards to investigations in possible inflicted injury.
- The committee is supporting the Implementation of the expert witness in family court action plan.
- There is ongoing work on a number of publications, see section below for more details.
- The committee is supporting the development of an RCPCH Child Protection Portal.

Recent and Upcoming publications

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, publication of both the 'Perplexing Presentations / FII guidance' and 'Good Practice service delivery standards for the management of children referred for child protection medical assessments' have been paused.

State of Child Health

The RCPCH [State of Child Health Report](#) was launched on the 4th March. This landmark report that provides a snapshot of children's physical and mental health across the UK includes indicators on children in the Child Protection System, Looked after Children, young carers and youth violence.

Child Protection Evidence

Call for reviewers: The Child Protection Systematic review team are looking for people to join the panel of expert reviewers to work on the critical appraisal of literature for the systematic reviews. Some experience in carrying out systematic reviews is preferred. If you are interested please contact research@rcpch.ac.uk.

Latest Child Protection Evidence updates:

The following systematic reviews are currently being updated:

- Fractures
- Neglect
- Retinal findings

These reviews are part of the Child Protection Evidence systematic review series available on the [RCPCH website](#).

The Faculty of Forensic and Legal Medicine have updated the following publications:

- [Recommendations – Operational procedures and equipment for clinical rooms in SARCs](#): updated Nov 2019
- [PICS Working Group Guidelines on Photography](#): updated Dec 2019

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- [Recommendations for the Collection of Forensic Specimens from Complainants and Suspects](#): updated Jan 2020
- [Recommendations for the collection of forensic specimens from complainants and suspects – the evidence](#): updated Jan 2020
- [Forensic Medical Form \(to accompany forensic samples\)](#): updated Jan 2020
- [FFLM Forensic Science Subcommittee Newsletter](#) – January 2020: items of note for paediatricians include toxicology / children / contamination v administration in CP cases and forensic science analysis in cases of sexual offences

Photo documentation in child protection medical assessments

A photo documentation survey was completed during the recent Child Protection Special Interest Group conference. The results evidence the wide diversity of service provision and practice with respect to photo documentation in child protection medical assessments.

Healthcare access for children and families on the move and migrants

The BMJ has published an article analysing the impact of the NHS charging regulations on migrant children's health and wellbeing as a result of delays or denials of healthcare.

COVID-19 and the impact on vulnerable children

In an article to be published in the upcoming Milestones magazine, Dr Elaine Burfitt discusses the indirect harms of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable children, including reduced opportunities for early recognition and response to child abuse. This will be available to read online in [May 2020](#).

Education

Below is a list of some of the current RCPCH and e-LfH safeguarding e-Learning modules and face to face courses. For a full range of courses, please visit our [website](#).

RCPCH e-Learning modules

[Exploitation of children and young people \(new\)](#)

[Emotional abuse and emotional neglect \(new\)](#)

[Imaging in the case of suspected physical abuse in children \(new\)](#)

[Professional witness report writing](#)

e-Learning for Healthcare (e-LfH) modules

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Level 3 \(recently updated\)](#)

Face to face courses for 2020 currently scheduled.

[Expert witness in child protection course \(Level 3+, 4 and 5\)](#)

This is due to take place on the 2nd and 3rd November, at the RCPCH London office.

Stay in touch

The Child Protection Standing Committee meets three times a year and these [summaries of our minutes](#) are made available on the RCPCH website. Recently, we have started to send these summaries out to all who have updated their contact preferences on the RCPCH website to receive updates about child protection. If you wish to learn more about what we are doing, please ensure that you have done this to receive our update three times per year.

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