

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

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.¹ 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.

Recent publications



Safeguarding children and young people: roles and competencies for paediatricians

All paediatricians have a responsibility to safeguard children and young people. To better support our members to do this, we have developed a new [safeguarding competencies framework](#) specifically for paediatricians and trainees. This is essential reading for all RCPCH members.

Establishing a correct diagnosis of Ehlers Danlos Syndrome hypermobility type (hEDS)

We've developed a [position statement](#) to clarify the current criteria in making a diagnosis of hEDS in children and adolescents. The statement provides advice for paediatric health professionals in relation to provision of appropriate rehabilitation. The statement has been supported by specialty groups.

Healthcare Standards for Children and Young People in Secure Settings [These standards](#) - first published in 2013, and refreshed in 2019 for England - help healthcare professionals, commissioners, service providers, regulators, managers and governors ensure that these young people receive the care they need to improve their health outcomes. They apply to children and young people aged between 10-17 (inclusive) on both welfare and justice placements in secure centres, including young offender institutions, secure children's homes, secure training centres and their equivalents.



Acting as an expert or professional witness – guidance for healthcare professionals

[This guidance](#), published by the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, is aimed specifically at healthcare clinical professionals who provide an expert opinion or act as professional or expert witnesses in courts or tribunals. It is produced by clinical professional organisations and sets out the standards and conduct expected of a clinician acting in the role of a witness. RCPCH contributed to the working group.

¹ [https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/saml_login?destination=/account/my-interests \[child protection\]](https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/saml_login?destination=/account/my-interests[child%20protection]) and [https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/saml_login?destination=/account/contact-preferences \[college updates\]](https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/saml_login?destination=/account/contact-preferences [college updates])



Latest updates to the Child Protection Companion

The CPC continues to be your go-to resource on child protection and safeguarding. Covering all forms of abuse and the spectrum of medical and social involvement, it focuses on all aspects from examination, to identification, to referral, to court.

The following chapters have recently been updated:

- **Chapter 6 (The Medical Assessment and Admission to Hospital)**
- **Chapter 9 (Recognition of Physical Abuse) > section 8 (Abusive abdominal and visceral injuries)**
- **Chapter 10 (Child Sexual Abuse)**
- **Chapter 11 (Neglect)**

For more information and to access the Companion, visit www.pcouk.org

Child Protection Evidence – latest review published

The updated systematic review on [Head and Spinal Injuries](#) has been published on the RCPCH website. The review seeks to help clinicians by highlighting the areas of the literature which show the features most indicative of abusive head trauma. In addition, newer high-quality studies have also allowed further developments in distinguishing abusive from non-abusive head trauma radiologically. The clinical and radiological characteristics of spinal injuries in abusive head trauma (AHT) are also described in this systematic review. The review is part of the Child Protection Evidence systematic review series available on the [RCPCH website](#).

Being Me resources

The [Being Me resources](#) were developed over five months through workshops and activity sessions with more than 20 Children in Care Council members at Warrington Borough Council and Knowsley Council and with RCPCH &Us. The group shared ideas and views on improving waiting areas, improving the use of technology and creating better online resources. They then developed the Being Me resources to help patients to talk with their doctors and nurses.



Upcoming publications

Perplexing Presentations / FII guidance update: a full draft of the update to the 2009 guidance has now been completed and is out for consultation over the summer. RCPCH are hoping to launch this updated guidance in November 2019.

Vulnerable children and families workforce: we are currently working on a report to highlight the variation in the workforce across child protection/safeguarding, child deaths and looked-after children, using RCPCH Census data, across the four UK nations. This will be published in October 2019.

Good Practice standards for the management of children referred for child protection medical assessments: CPSIG have been leading the development of these joint CPSIG-RCPCH standards. These are expected to be published in 2020.

For further information, or a full copy of the minutes from the latest meeting (June 2019) please contact: health.policy@rcpch.ac.uk

Work of the RCPCH Child Protection Standing Committee

New committee lead for Looked After Children: the committee have welcomed Dr Vicki Walker, to lead on our LAC work. One of Vicki's first priorities is strengthening the voice of named and designated LAC professionals at national level. If you are interested in hearing more and in being part of this work, or have colleagues who might be, please get in touch via health.policy@rcpch.ac.uk.

Child Protection committee vacancies: we currently have two vacancies on our child protection standing committee: [find out more and apply by Monday 23 September](#).

- Assistant Officer for Child Protection (publications)
- Trainee Representative

Working groups:

- **Expert witnesses:** RCPCH are part of a working group with the Family Court looking at the difficulties they are experiencing in finding expert witnesses, particularly in paediatrics. Follow a survey of members to identify the barriers, we are working on a joint report with the Family Court looking at solutions, due in Autumn.
- **Mandatory reporting:** The RCPCH position on mandatory reporting was last reviewed in 2015/16. Given the evidence and activity since that date, the committee agreed to put the RCPCH position on mandatory reporting under review in 2019. The evidence will be analysed by a small task and finish group and recommendations on whether the position needs to be updated will be presented to the CPSC later in the year.
- **Peer review guidance:** the Committee agreed to update the RCPCH guidance on peer review in the 2019 workplan. This was [last updated in 2012](#). RCPCH regularly receives queries and clarifications relating to peer review that will be considered in this update.
- **Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) workforce:** RCPCH and FFLM are continue to work with NHS England to support their SARC workforce review in England.
- **British Association of Forensic Odontology:** we are looking to develop referral criteria and pathways to ensure that children who have sustained bites are able to have expert opinion to ensure the appropriate outcome for them
- **Royal Colleges of Ophthalmologist and Pathologists:** we are discussing operation tension between paediatricians requesting ophthalmologists look at infants eyes immediately post mortem and ophthalmologists who are stating that there is no evidence base for interpretation of post mortem eye findings without sending specimens off for specialist pathology.

Advocacy:

- **Children not in school:** we have responded to a Department for Education consultation looking at introducing new measures to safeguarding children not in school, including the introduction of a duty on local authorities to maintain a register of children of compulsory school age who are not registered at certain schools. We continue to discuss our support for these proposals with the DfE.
- **NHS charging regulations:** following a survey of members to collect evidence of the impact of the charging regulations on healthcare access for children on the move and migrants, we are writing this up for journal publication.
- **Use of pain-inducing restraint in the secure estate:** In a [letter to Mr Charlie Taylor](#), we recommend that pain inducing restraint techniques are a form of child abuse, violate children's rights and must be prohibited.

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Events

CPSIG conference: The Child Protection Special Interest Group national conference is on 7 November 2019 in Birmingham. [You can book a place online.](#)

RCPCH annual conference 2020: the next annual conference is taking place from 28-30 April in Liverpool. We will be running the popular Child Protection Symposium session on 30 April from 11.15-15.00. We are accepting abstracts for oral presentation, and as part of our poster exhibition. [Find out more and submit by Monday 21 October.](#)

Items for information

NSPCC's latest campaign: We're supporting NSPCC's [campaign](#) so all new mums and dads get the mental health support they need at the right time, so their babies have the best start in life. Join us and fight for a #FairStart



RCPCH Ambassadors: opportunity now open!

Use your clinical experience, communication skills and interest in health policy to make a real impact - [become an RCPCH Ambassador](#). You'll engage with health leaders in your area to improve services for children, young people and the workforce that serves them.

Education

We run a number of safeguarding courses across the UK. For the full range of face-to-face and e-Learning courses available, [please visit our website.](#)

Excellence in Statement and Report Writing (Safeguarding Level 3)

18 November 2019, London - A focused barrister-led course designed to help paediatricians develop their statement and report writing skills.

Expert Witness in Child Protection: Developing excellence

02 December 2019, London

Excellence in Statement and Report Writing (Safeguarding Level 3)

22 April 2020, Edinburgh, Scotland

Child Sexual Assault and the Forensic Examination: A best practice course

08 October 2019, London - This holistic course enables paediatricians - working with children who have experienced suspected sexual assault - to develop both the technical and forensic skills

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