



# What happens if a health care professional is worried about your child being safe?



**If a healthcare professional is worried that your child is not safe, or is being abused, they have a duty, in law, to take action.**

All children have the right to be;

1. healthy
2. safe
3. protected from abuse or neglect

If a healthcare professional thinks that your child and family needs help, then the health professional will speak to you about this. Sometimes this can be upsetting but this leaflet will help to answer some of the questions you might have.

### **Every situation is different**

We, as healthcare professionals will work in partnership with you, to help you and your child get the right level of care and support. We might talk to other professionals, who know your child, before we decide what to do.

If we still feel that your child is not safe, or we are concerned that your child is being abused or neglected, we may need to tell other services that work with families to keep children safe. This might include local Children's Services.

**Remember:** A child is anyone up to the age of 18 years old

All healthcare professionals have a duty in law to act in a child's best interests



### **Talking to you**

We will tell you why we are worried about your child and tell you what we plan to do. The only time we would not discuss this with you and your child is if we were worried that it could make things worse for your child.

You can ask questions about what we say, and ask for further information if you do not understand.

All health professionals will:

- be honest and tell you why they are worried
- listen to what you have to say
- keep an open mind about what might be happening to your child
- offer to use an interpreter if English is not your first language

### **Talking to your child**

Where appropriate, we will want to talk to your child and listen to what they have to say. Often this will include speaking to them on their own. When we speak to your child, we will ask them for their permission to share their information.

### **Information sharing**

You will be asked for your permission to share the information we know about your child, unless we think more harm will come to your child if we do this. We will also try to get your child's permission to share their information.

If you do not want your information being shared with others, please tell us why.

Most of the time, we will not share information about you or your family unless you say we can. Sometimes we may not need permission to share information with other people if we are concerned your child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm.

## Useful Contacts

### Local Children's Services contact numbers

Hampshire Children's Services

Tel: 0300 555 1384 Tel: 0300 555 1373 (out of hours)

Isle of Wight Children's services

Tel: 0300 300 0117 Tel: 0300 555 1373 (out of hours)

Southampton Children's services

Tel: 023 8083 3336 Tel: 02380 832 300 (out of hours)

Portsmouth Children's services

Tel: 0845 671 0271 Tel: 0300 555 1373 (out of hours)

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

0808 800 5000 [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

Family Rights Group is a registered charity which advocates for parents and carers in connection with local authority decision-making about children who are involved with, or require Children's Services in England. The service is independent of all statutory agencies and aims to help families understand their rights.

Tel: 0808 800 222 [www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)



This leaflet is intended for use by Healthcare Professionals working across Hampshire, Southampton, Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.