

Undetermined Mark Pathway

Portsmouth City, Southampton City, SE Hampshire and SW Hampshire

This pathway is for non-mobile infants (infants aged 0-6 months) who are covered by the Coral Clinic in Portsmouth or the Magnolia Clinic in Southampton for in-hours child protection medical assessments. Please see page 5 of the HIPS Procedures document, '[Arranging a child protection medical](#)' for geographical areas covered by these clinics.

This pathway runs alongside the HIPS [Infant Bruising and Injury Protocol](#) and offers an alternative for infants where **healthcare practitioners think they are seeing a birth mark, or other potentially non-concerning mark**, but can't be sure it is not a bruise or injury. **If any practitioner thinks they are seeing a bruise or other concerning injury** the [Bruising and Injury Protocol](#) must be followed

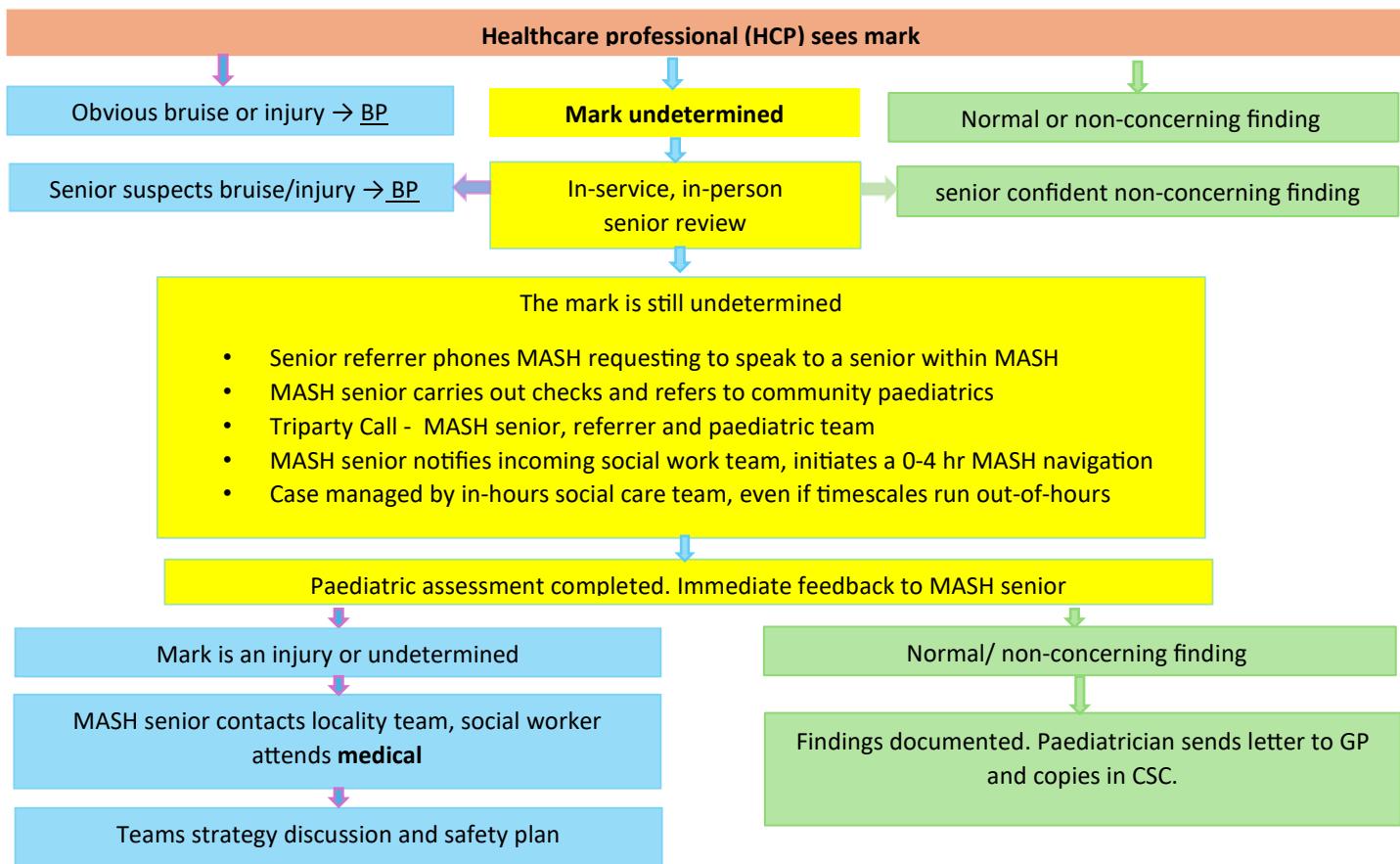
The pathway was piloted in Portsmouth in 2022-2023 and included:

- Body maps completed for all newborns, whether or not they have any skin markings
- In-service senior review within midwifery, health visiting and primary care teams
- MASH seniors, referrers and paediatric teams discuss together, and, if all are in agreement, paediatric assessment is conducted without opening a section47 assessment. The paediatricians feedback to in-hours children's social care (CSC) teams following assessment and decisions about any CSC or police investigations are made at this point.

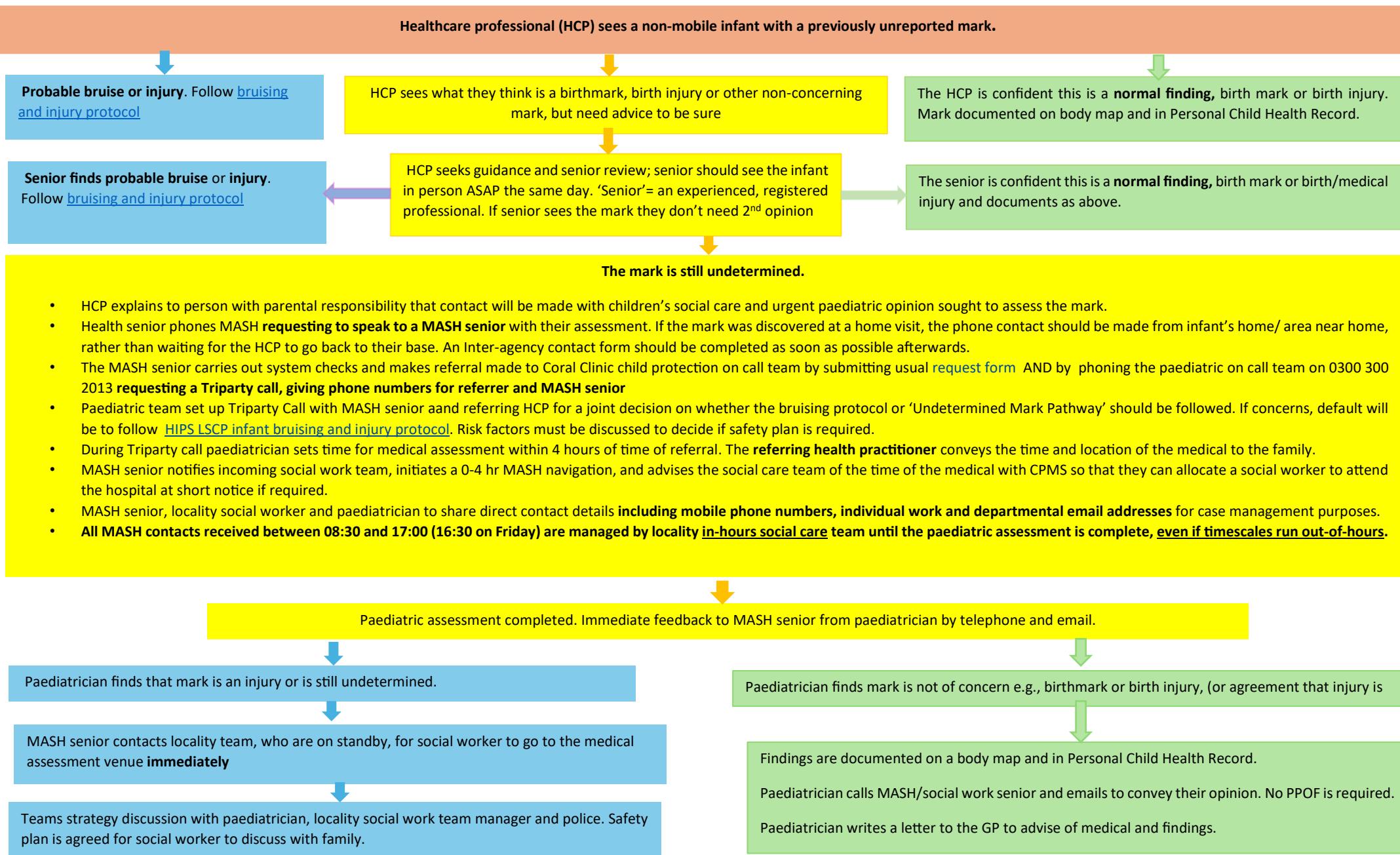
The pathway was successful, resulting in significantly fewer referrals into MASH, a better experience for families whose infants don't have concerning injuries, and there was no evidence that injuries were missed or that there were delays in CSC and police investigations.

The pathway was rolled out to SE Hants and to Southampton City in 2024-2025 and implementation is planned in SW Hants from 1st December 2025, with implementation to be considered by Isle of Wight and North Hampshire teams in 2026.

The pathway: summary (see over for detailed pathways for each MASH/CRS)



Pathway for Portsmouth City Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)



Pathway for Southampton City Childrens Resource Centre (CRS)

Healthcare professional (HCP) sees a non-mobile infant with a previously unreported mark.

Probable bruise or injury. Follow [bruising and injury protocol](#)

The HCP sees what they think is a birthmark, birth injury or other non-concerning mark, but need advice to be sure

The HCP is confident this is a **normal finding**, birth mark or birth injury. Mark documented on body map and in Personal Child Health Record.

Senior finds probable bruise or injury.
Follow [bruising and injury protocol](#)

HCP seeks guidance and senior review. HCP should see the infant in person ASAP, the same day by 3pm. If senior sees the mark they don't need 2nd opinion.
'Senior' = an experienced, registered professional (for FNP – supervisor or SPOC)

The senior HCP is confident this is a **normal finding**, birth mark or birth/medical injury and documents as above.

The mark is still undetermined

- HCP explains to person with parental responsibility that contact will be made with children's social care and urgent paediatric opinion sought to assess the mark.
- HCP makes immediate telephone contact to Childrens resource service (CRS) 02380 832400 (option 2 – professionals' line) requesting to speak to information officer and clearly states contact is for the **Undetermined Mark Pathway**. Name, DOB and NHS number of infant given. Online referral form is completed - state undetermined mark pathway is being followed.
- CRS complete care director checks including current/previous involvement with social care and assesses if any immediate actions are required to ensure the child's safety. If not, health professional can leave the family home or allow the family to leave the premises.
- Information officer discusses with Asst Team Manager in CRS and holds case as open contact to CRS. Referral made to Magnolia Clinic child protection on call team by submitting usual [request form](#) AND by phoning the paediatric on call team on 0300 123 6662, requesting a Triparty call, giving phone numbers for referrer and CRS assistant team manager
- Paediatric team set up Triparty Call with referring HCP and assistant team manager in CRS for a joint decision on whether the bruising protocol or 'Undetermined Mark Pathway' should be followed.
- If concerns, default will be to follow [HIPS LSCP infant bruising and injury protocol](#). Risk factors must be discussed to decide if safety plan is required.
- During Triparty call paediatrician sets time for medical assessment within 4 hours of time of referral. Confirms contact details for CRS, referrer and family (telephone and email).
- If case likely to run after 5pm confirm who will take over case from CRS perspective – out of hours contact and numbers shared.
- The referring HCP conveys the time and location of the medical to the family

Paediatric assessment completed. Outcome shared via telephone and email with CRS team (if out of hours- share with out of hours team) and with referring HCP

Paediatrician finds that mark is an injury or is still undetermined.

Paediatrician finds mark is not of concern e.g., birthmark/birth injury or agreement injury is accidental

CRS team accepts referral on child's record and liaises with appropriate social care team **urgently** for social worker to be sent immediately to the venue where the assessment is being

Findings are documented on child's electronic health record, a body map and in Personal Child Health Record. Record, stating rationale and assessment.

Teams strategy discussion with paediatrician, locality social work team manager and police. Safety plan is agreed for social worker to discuss with family.
Outcome sent to HCP (HV/FN/MW/GP generic email address

No PPOF is required

Paediatrician writes a letter to the GP to advise of medical and findings.

Pathway for Hampshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – SE Hants and SW Hants

