

Executive Introduction

This policy reflects the standards set in the Cheshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) manual of procedures.

As a statutory partner of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), the Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust recognises that it has a clear responsibility to identify and respond to issues of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children. Every adult has a responsibility to protect children and as employees of the Trust we are duty bound always to act in the best interests of a child about whom we may have concerns.

This organisation is governed by legislation to discharge its safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children responsibilities effectively and as such must adhere to the 1989 and 2004 Children Act, Working Together to Safeguard Children DCSF 2013, and the Cheshire West and Chester LSCB Manual of Procedures for Safeguarding Children in Cheshire 2013. For Flintshire children the All Wales Child Protection Procedures should be followed.

Please see the CoCH Safeguarding Children Professional Structure and Safeguarding Children Reporting mechanisms in **Appendix 1**

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Executive Lead for Safe Guarding Children Sept 2015

Due to the frequent use and for easier reading throughout this policy please note:

The following 2 terms will be abbreviated to:

Local Safeguarding Children Board (**LSCB**)

Children’s Social Care (**CSC**)

SECTION FIVE: SUPPORTING STAFF AND VOICING CONCERNS

Escalation and Resolution

“There will always be differences of professional opinion. However, practitioners and agencies have a responsibility to challenge when it is believed that other agencies are failing to recognize child maltreatment and/or their response leaves children at risk of significant harm. This policy is to ensure partner agencies have a quick and straightforward means of resolving professional differences in view of specific cases, in order to safeguard the welfare of children and young people” (LSCB Resolution Pathway and Escalation Policy 2013)

If at any point a member of CoCH staff feels that their concerns about a child are not being acted upon appropriately they must discuss this with the safeguarding children team who will take responsibility for ensuring the case is appropriately managed within the CoCH. If the safeguarding children team are concerned that concerns about a child are not being managed appropriately by Children’s Social Care, the case must be discussed with the relevant team manager within Children’s Social Care. If this does not resolve the differences and the concerns for the child remain, the case will be discussed with the Designated Doctor and Nurse for Safeguarding Children and at the highest level within Children’s Social Care. If the child is within the hospital setting, he/she should not be discharged until CoCH staff can conclude that their concerns are being addressed in the child’s best interests. Any unresolved issues will be managed as per LSCB escalation policy which can be accessed via [\(CoCH intranet\)](#)

The Trust will support staff as part of its commitment in the implementation of this policy; the range of support available can be reviewed in the Supporting Staff Policy. Safeguarding children issues may be stressful for staff who need to empathise with victims and carers, confront abuse issues, resolve conflict and establish support and protection. It is important that the impact on staff is recognised and that they have appropriate opportunities for support through management or clinical supervision. If necessary, it should be possible to offer access to confidential independent counselling. This can be accessed via the Occupational Health Department.

Speak Out Safely (Raising Concerns about Patient Care) and Whistle Blowing Policy

It is the responsibility of all members of staff, medical, clinical or non-clinical, to ensure that high standards of care, treatment and services are provided at all times for patients and that all patients are **safely** in our care. From time to time, staff may have concerns about the care or treatment given to any patient(s), including **children and young people**, and may wish to discuss these with managers. All concerns raised by staff about patient care will be dealt with seriously, promptly, and be subject to a thorough and impartial investigation where necessary. Managers have a particular responsibility to protect patients, and to handle concerns about their care in a way that will encourage the voicing of genuine misgivings, while at the same time protecting staff against unfounded allegations. No recriminations will follow reports which are made in good faith about low standards of care or possible abuses. All staff must comply with the Trust Values and put patients at the heart of everything they do