



Royal College
of Nursing

Caring for Children and Young People

Guidance for nurses working in the independent sector

CLINICAL PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE

This document has been designed in collaboration with our members to ensure it meets most accessibility standards. However, if this does not fit your requirements, please contact corporate.communications@rcn.org.uk

RCN Legal Disclaimer

This publication contains information, advice and guidance to help members of the RCN. It is intended for use within the UK but readers are advised that practices may vary in each country and outside the UK. The information in this booklet has been compiled from professional sources, but its accuracy is not guaranteed. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the RCN provides accurate and expert information and guidance, it is impossible to predict all the circumstances in which it may be used. Accordingly, the RCN shall not be liable to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by what is contained in or left out of this website information and guidance.

Published by the Royal College of Nursing, 20 Cavendish Square, London, W1G 0RN

© 2020 Royal College of Nursing. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical

Introduction 4.....

Organising services for children and young people6....

Pain management9.....

Consent10.....

Nursing, medical and allied health professional staffing11..

References14.....

Rn.....trvss.....l(o)neobg...12scn /GS1.....dC

Introduction

This Royal College of Nursing (RCN) publication is an update of previous guidance (RCN, 2013a) and reflects current guidance relating to the care of children in hospital settings. The guidance identifies key points for organising children and young people's health care

-

Age of patients

It is generally accepted that children under the age of three should only be admitted to specialist paediatric units due to the increased risk of anaesthetic problems that occur in

- accommodation close to the child's bed or room so that a parent/carer can remain with their child in hospital (DH, 2004)
- designated areas for treatment of children and young people, with readily available child-sized equipment, including emergency drugs and resuscitation equipment (NHS England, 2014).

Operations

Children and young people should be scheduled on a dedicated children's list for surgery. Where this is not possible, children and young people should be scheduled at the beginning or end of mixed children and adult lists and to meet the needs of the child and family (RCS England, 2013). In addition, the following protocols should be adhered to:

- children and young people should fast for as short a time as possible before surgery, with fasting times decided in consultation with the anaesthetist (RCS England, 2013)
- children and young people should not be cared for alongside adults in recovery areas, and parents/carers should be allowed to visit their child in the recovery area (RCOA, 2020)
- a paediatric early warning tool should be used post-operatively to monitor the child's condition and detect early signs of deterioration (Healthcare Improvement Scotland, 2014)
- facilities should provide short-term high dependency care in the event of a child becoming critically unwell. A policy should be in place to ensure that the child is transferred to a high dependency unit as soon as possible.

Pain management

All staff caring for children and young people must understand the importance of adequate pain control in children and should receive training in the assessment and management of pain in children (RCN, 2009). In addition, organisations caring for children and young people should have a pain management protocol to ensure that children receive adequate and appropriate analgesia (RCN, 2009).

Pain management procedures

- A local anaesthetic cream should be applied prior to intravenous cannulation or the taking of blood.
- Analgesia should be administered orally, intravenously or rectally once consent is agreed (NHS Scotland, 2006) and intramuscular (IM) injections should be avoided where possible.
- A pain assessment tool should be used to suit the age and cognitive ability of the individual child or young person. Where a child is unable to communicate pain, a tool incorporating physiological and behavioural indicators should be used (RCN, 2009; RCN, 2017).
- Pain assessment should be regular and include the child's response to pain relief (RCN, 2009). Age-appropriate verbal and written advice, and instructions on the management of pain post discharge, should be given to the child or young person and their family. Take-home medication and/or a prescription for analgesia should be given on discharge home (mychildsinpain, 2017).

Consent

It is very important that staff looking after children and young people understand the issues of consent. Prior to any treatment or procedure, the consent of the child or young person (where possible) and the child's parents or carers must be obtained (NHS Scotland, 2006). Consent for the treatment is usually obtained from the person who holds parental responsibility for the child/young person (RCPCH, 2017). Ensure all discussions with the child/young person and their family regarding consent is documented in the child's health record (NCEPOD, 2011).

Anyone over the age of 16 can consent to treatment or care (Family Law Reform Act, 1987). Anyone under the age of 16 in England and Wales may be able to consent to treatment provided they understand the nature and consequences of the treatment (Gillick v Norwich and Wisbech Health Authority, 1985). Anyone under the age of 16 in Scotland may be able to consent to the treatment provided they understand the nature and consequences of the treatment (Age of Legal Capacity (Scotland) Act, 1991; Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2014).

When a child or young person under the age of 16 does not understand the nature of the treatment, consent can be provided by another person with parental responsibility (see: Who has parental responsibility?). When a person under the age of 16 refuses treatment, there are complex legal rules that may allow another person to provide consent if this is in the child's best interests. This area is problematic, and each case needs individual assessment and can be referred to the Court of Protection (DH, 2001).

Who has parental responsibility?

Mothers automatically have parental responsibility for their children. Fathers also have parental responsibility if they wroeen

Nursing, medical and allied health professional staffing

- Employers should refer to a copy of the local area safeguarding procedures and local safeguarding children board (LSCB) or equivalent for additional information and guidance.
- The organisation should have a named professional responsible for overseeing local practice and training (HM Government, 2013).

Staff training and education

If staff training and education cannot be provided in-house it should be arranged with an independent children's nurse consultant or local NHS hospital. Training should be given to all staff providing care to children and young people on appointment and annually for skills updating (NMC, 2016). Self-directed learning is also recommended.

On appointment

Staff providing care to children and young people should have a good understanding of the following areas:

- communicating with children, young people and families
- consent issues in children and young people's care, including parental responsibility
- safeguarding children and children's rights (RCN,2019)
- paediatric emergency and resuscitation techniques
- paediatric drug dosages and drug administration
- paediatric pain assessment and management of pain
- taking and recording of vital signs in children and young people of all ages (RCN, 2017)
- moving and handling techniques
- health and safety issues
- paediatric patient safety and quality improvement.

Annual updates

Training for staff providing care to children and young people should as a minimum cover the following areas:

-

Clinical governance

Clear systems and processes should be in place for ensuring high quality care and risk reduction in relation to children and young people in hospital (RCN, 2013b and RCN, 2014). This will include clear lines of responsibility and accountability for the care of children, policies and procedures and risk management guidance for staff in relation to:

- the provision of clinical care across all departments
- staffing requirements when children and young people are admitted
- nurse recruitment
- nurse education and training
- information for children and young people
- gathering patient feedback to contribute to service monitoring
- service improvement
- complaints management
- dealing with emergencies.

References

Action for Children (2018) *Revolving door* . Watford: Action for Children. Available at: www.actionforchildren.org.uk (accessed 24 October 2020)

Age of Legal Capacity (Scotland) Act 1991 [online]. Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk (accessed 24 October 2020)

Bristol Royal Infirmary Inquiry (2001) *The report of the public inquiry into children’s heart surgery at the Bristol Royal Infirmary 1984–1995: learning from Bristol* . London: The Stationery Office (Chairman: I Kennedy)

British Association for Community Child Health (1995) *Child health rights: implementing the UN convention on the rights of the child within the National Health Service – a practitioner’s guide* . London: BACCH

Care Quality Commission (2017) *Fundamental standards* . London: CQC. [online] Available at: www.cqc.org.uk/what-we-do/how-we-do-our-job/fundamental-standards (accessed 24 October 2020)

Children Act 1989 [online]. Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk (accessed 24 October 2020)

Children Act 2004 [online]. Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk (accessed 24 October 2020)

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 [online]. Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk (accessed 24 October 2020)

Children (Scotland) Act 1995 [online]. Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk (accessed 24 October 2020)

Children’s Services Co-operation Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 [online] Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk

Children’s Services Co-operation Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 [online] Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk (a)092 0obr6l81.9 (a)5.2 (n)-3.8 10.6 (t 1)8.3 (9)-8.7 (9)1 (5 []31.8 (on)1.7 (l)14.

Health and Social Care Act 2012. [online] Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk (accessed 24 October 2020)

Health Education England and the Nursing and Midwifery Council (2015) Shape of caring: A review of the future education and training of registered nurses and care assistants . HEE and NMC

HM Government (2013) Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. London: DfE. Available at: www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory (accessed 24 October 2020)

My child is in Pain (2017) Information for parents whose child has had day surgery.

Available at: <https://mychildisinpain.org>.1.2 w82a5c19e0-2d47-07eb-28-h535 (S)186(t)2(M376240(228((2

Royal College of Anaesthetists (2020) Chapter 10: Guidelines for the provision of paediatric anaesthesia services. London: RCoA. Available at: www.rcoa.ac.uk (accessed 24 October 2020)

Royal College of Nursing (2002) Caring for Children: guidance for nurses working in the independent sector. London: RCN. Available at: www.rcn.org.uk/publications (accessed 24 October 2020)

Royal College of Nursing (2009) The Recognition and Assessment of Acute Pain in Children. London: RCN. Available at: www.rcn.org.uk/publications (accessed 24 October 2020)

Royal College of Nursing (2013a) Caring for Children: guidance for nurses working in the independent sector. London: RCN. Available at: www.rcn.org.uk/publications (accessed 24 October 2020)

Royal College of Nursing (2013b) Defining Staffing Levels for Children and Young People's Services: RCN standards for clinical professionals and service managers. London: RCN (new edition scheduled for early 2021). Available at: www.rcn.org.uk/publications (accessed 24 October 2020)

Royal College of Nursing (2014) Health Care Service Standards for Neonates, Children and Young People. London: RCN (new edition scheduled for early 2021). Available at: www.rcn.org.uk/publications (accessed 24 October 2020)

Royal College of Nursing (2016) Getting it Right for Children and Young People. Briefing paper Inequalities experienced by children in the UK accessing the right care, at the right time, in the right place. London: RCN. Available at: www.rcn.org.uk/publications (accessed 24 October 2020)

Royal College of Nursing (2017) Standards for Assessing, Measuring and Monitoring Vital Signs in Infants, Children and Young People. London: RCN. Available at: www.rcn.org.uk/publications (accessed 24 October 2020)

Royal College of Nursing (2019) Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competencies for Healthcare Staff. London: RCN. Available at: www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pub-007366 (accessed 24 October 2020)

Royal College of Nursing (2020) Staffing for Safe and Effective Care. London: RCN. Available at: www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/staffing-for-safe-aNtssa-1.cCo L-iofu

43 (s)7 (i)8 (n)4.4 (g C)10.1 (h)5.8 (-)7(s)7 (i)8 (n)pu O6

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (2015b) Facing the Future – together for child health . London: RCPCH. Available at: www.rcpch.ac.uk (accessed 24 October 2020)

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (2017) Facing the Future – standards for children and young people’s emergency care . London: RCPCH. Available at: www.rcpch.ac.uk (accessed 24 October 2020)

Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (2018) Facing the Future – standards for children with ongoing healths aian. L2.6636f703.4 (dr. 4 (cp)-6 (c4 (cp(C)1Kerg20.004 Tw -19.888 -1.2 Td [(a

Ball, A., Bindler, R. and Cowen, K. (2012) Clinical skills manual for principles of pediatric nursing: caring for children . Pearson. Available at: www.pearson.com/us/higher-

Care Quality Commission
cqc.org.uk

Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (a body of the Northern Ireland Executive)
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-social-services-and-public-safety

Health and Social Care Act 2012
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7

NHS Toolkit for producing patient information
www.uea.ac.uk/documents/746480/2855738/Toolkit_for_producing_patient_information.pdf

RCN quality assurance

Publication

This is an RCN practice guidance. Practice guidance are evidence-based consensus documents, used to guide decisions about appropriate care of an individual, family or population in a specific context.

Description

This updated publication is for nurses working in the independent sector and identifies

