

Core brief

Friday, 19 October 2018

Introduction

This issue brings you information on child protection.

Message from Jane Grant, Chief Executive

Information Sharing - Child Protection

The protection of children and young people at risk is “everyone’s responsibility and everyone’s job”. This cuts across all aspects of private and professional life, furthermore all NHSGGC staff have a duty, individually and collectively, to protect vulnerable children and young people.

Children and young people have a right to privacy and the utmost care must be taken when handling their personal information. However, I recognise when there are concerns about children and young people who may be at risk of harm, staff may be required to seek and exchange personal information about those children, young people and their families.

I understand that questions of privacy and confidentiality can and sometimes do get in the way of ensuring the safety of children and young people at risk. I am also aware recent legislative changes with regard to the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) may have caused further uncertainty about sharing of information in cases where there may be a Child Protection concern. At the request of the Scottish Government the Information Commissioner’s Office have advised:-

“It is important that those whose work brings them into contact with children and young people continue to share Child Protection concerns in the same way as they did previously. Child Protection matters at the significant harm level equate to sharing/processing being necessary to protect the vital interests of the child where reliance on consent may be prejudicial to that purpose”

Where there are concerns, and staff are unsure if these meet the threshold of significant harm or Child Protection, it is important to note that other legal bases still exist within GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 that enable staff to proportionately share information. Protecting children and young people is a priority for NHSGGC.

I wish to support all staff to undertake their roles with confidence, feeling empowered and competent in sharing information when they have concerns. This includes staff who work mainly with adults and who may obtain information that would be appropriate to share in order to protect children and young people.

I would remind all staff that they can access advice and support via the Child Protection Service at Child Protection Home page or by telephone on 0141 451 6605.

If staff have any queries regarding data protection/GDPR in general or specific queries in relation to data sharing they can contact the Board’s Data Protection Officer at data.protection@ggc.scot.nhs.uk for advice.