

## HUNTER AREA EMERGENCY SERVICES POLICY

**SUBJECT:** Admission of Infants and Children and Transfer to a Higher Level Care Facility

**POLICY NUMBER:**

**DATE OF POLICY:** February 2005

**LAST REVISED:** February 2007

### **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Infants and children receive quality emergency and/or inpatient care and timely transfer to a higher level care facility if necessary.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

When there is no definitive diagnosis or signs or clinical improvement in the 24 hours following admission:

- contact with a specialist paediatrician and/or appropriate specialist medical officer must occur.
- the child's primary carer must be notified of this and if possible be present if their child is transferred to a higher level care facility.

### **POLICY:**

**It is in the best interests of infants and children for them to be cared for in an environment which best meets their needs, this includes:**

- *an appropriate physical environment*
- *access to age appropriate play activities **and***
- *staff who can competently meet their health needs and development needs in a safe and therapeutic environment.*

- 1.1** Admission of infant's and children for observation and medical management is arranged under the care of the admitting general practitioner / paediatrician.
- 1.2** Consultation with a specialist paediatrician or an appropriate specialist medical officer must occur if the infant/child's clinical condition deteriorates, becomes unstable or discharge is not anticipated within 48 hours.
- 1.3** This admission should be for a period of no longer than 48 hours with either discharge or transfer to a higher level care facility occurring or consultation with a paediatrician.

- 1.4 Infants and children should not be separated from their primary carer at the time of admission and especially in the emergency situation.
- 1.5 Ongoing care will be the responsibility of the admitting general practitioner/ paediatrician, however care may be provided, after appropriate consultation, by the medical officer rostered for after hours on call.
- 1.6 Telephone advice about the ongoing care of an infant or child can be obtained by contacting the Paediatrician on call at Maitland Hospital by ringing 4939 2000 (external) or 52 000 (internal).
- 1.7 Nursing staff caring for infants and children may obtain advice from nursing staff in the Paediatric Unit at The Maitland Hospital – 4939 2259 or 52 259. Alternatively they can contact the paediatric nurse working on the Kids Care Line, John Hunter Children’s Hospital – 4921 2800 or 12800.
- 1.8 The infant/child should be able to be seen (observed/line of sight) by an appropriate (nurse or primary care giver) adult at all times.
- 1.9 The infant /child’s parent or primary caregiver are actively encouraged to room in (stay at the bedside) with their child and participate in their child’s care during hospitalisation.
- 1.10 Parents /primary care givers are orientated to the ward and relevant practices to assist them to safely provide care to their child.
- 1.11 Children and their parents have informed participation in all decisions involving their health care.
- 1.12 All invasive and potentially painful procedures are performed in the designated treatment room and not whilst the child is in their bed/cot. Exceptions would include immobilised children and when the child’s clinical condition prevents movement.
- 1.13 Children’s bed and cot sides rails must be up when young children and infants are in the their bed/cot unattended.

**DEVELOPED BY:**

- Lower /Upper Hunter Emergency Guidelines Committee
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