

1. Introduction

There may be occasions where UHL staff members opinions differ with regards a safeguarding case and there are disagreements with decisions or actions taken. In those instances where a staff member continues to have concerns he/she is entitled to request a second opinion.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all clinical staff working within UHL.

3. Guideline Standards and Procedures

Resolving Practitioner Disagreements

Concern arising from

- Differing practitioner opinion
- Disagreement to decisions made
- Disagreement to actions taken

This can be at any stage in the safeguarding process

Step 1: Direct practitioner to practitioner discussion

Differences of opinion or judgment should be discussed amongst front-line practitioners to attempt to achieve a shared understanding and agree a local resolution

Step 2: Direct Manager to Manager discussion

each practitioner should now discuss the issue with their line manager (Paediatric Consultant On-call or Ward Sister/Nurse in Charge). The line managers should review the concerns and ensure that they are justified. They should then liaise with the other practitioner's manager in an attempt to reach a resolution.

Step 3: Where practitioner differences remain unresolved

where agreement cannot be reached at Steps 1 & 2 the case must be referred to the UHL Named Doctor for Safeguarding and/or the UHL Named Nurse & Matron for Safeguarding on x15770 and where appropriate a resolutions meeting should be convened between all relevant practitioners.

Practitioners and Managers can seek advice from the UHL Safeguarding Children Team on x15770 or via email: child.protectionteam@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

At all stages actions & decisions must be recorded in writing and shared with UHL Safeguarding Children Team
Template available in Appendix 1

At no time must professional disagreement distract from ensuring that the child is safeguarded. The child's welfare and safety must remain paramount throughout.

Where a practitioner believes that a child is at risk of significant harm, then, the escalation MUST be made on the same working day.

If the dispute is regarding the actions and decisions made by another agency then liaise with the UHL Safeguarding Children Team. The Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Safeguarding Partnerships procedures '[Resolving Practitioner Disagreements and Escalation of Concerns](#)' must be followed. This document describes in further detail the process for resolving a professional dispute.

- 3.1 The Children Act (2004) and Working Together to Safeguard Children set out expectations that people working directly with families, whether this is with the child or parent, work to multi-agency plans and processes.
- 3.2 Good practice includes the expectation that there is professional and constructive challenge amongst colleagues within agencies and between agencies. Where a member of staff from any agency is concerned that concerns or agreed actions regarding a child are not being addressed or acted upon in a timely and consistent manner, it is expected that the escalation procedure should be used to reach a satisfactory outcome that is in the best interests of the child.
- 3.3 In all cases where child protection or child in need concerns are raised a Safeguarding Referral must be completed on ICE, and the Safeguarding Children Team notified on x15770.
- 3.4 In cases where a staff member feels a concern is not being addressed then their immediate line manager should be notified to seek local resolution. If this cannot occur then the flowchart (page 1) and following guidance should be followed:
- a) Where disagreement occurs, the Consultant Paediatrician on-call must be contacted to provide a second opinion.
 - b) In the event of continued unresolved differences of professional views, then the case should be referred to the Named Doctor or Named Nurse for Safeguarding in UHL on x15770.
 - c) If the dispute is regarding the actions and decisions made by another agency then The Leicester and the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnerships procedures, [Resolving Practitioner Disagreements and Escalation of Concerns \(proceduresonline.com\)](http://proceduresonline.com) must be followed. This document describes in further detail the process for resolving a professional dispute.

4. Following Resolution

When the matter is satisfactorily resolved in relation to the particular child or young person, any learning identified should be sent to the Safeguarding Children office to inform learning.

To avoid similar practitioner disagreements arising again, amendments may be required to protocol and procedures.

It may also be helpful for individuals to debrief following some disagreements, in order to promote continuing good working relationships. Consultation with your safeguarding team may assist with this process.

Safeguarding Children Case Escalation

Please return to: child.protectionteam@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Name:	Date of Birth:
Hospital Number:	Named Ward Nurse:
Current Safeguarding Level: Please highlight: None Early Help Targeted Support CIN Child Protection	Safeguarding Supervision Date:
	Named Safeguarding Specialist Nurse:
Date of Internal Escalation (<i>date of disagreement</i>)	Allocated Social Worker:
Date of Escalation to Ward Manager:	Date of Escalation to Social Care:
Date of Escalation to Safeguarding Team:	Date of Escalation to Named Doctor or Matron for Safeguarding:
Date of Escalation to Service Manager:	
Reason for escalation (Practitioner to Practitioner):	
Outcome:	
Name (print):	
Signature:	Date
Further Escalation (Safeguarding Nurse to manager)	
Reason for escalation:	

Outcome:

Name (print):

Signature:

Date

Further Escalation (Safeguarding Matron to Senior manager)

Reason for escalation:

Outcome:

Name (print):

Signature:

Date

Further escalation (Head of Safeguarding to Service Manager)

Reason for escalation:

DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL RECORD FOR THIS DOCUMENT			
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Date	Issue Number	Reviewed By	Description Of Changes (If Any)
May 2022		Michelle Kelly	Addition of a flowchart
May 2022		Michelle Kelly	Update of hyperlinks
May 2022		Michelle Kelly	Update of telephone extension numbers
May 2022		Michelle Kelly	Addition of 4. Following resolution
May 2022		Michelle Kelly	Addition of Appendix 1. Template for recording escalation
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