

supported, loved and cared for whilst their loved one is in hospital.



Useful websites

Childline www.childline.org.uk

www.gmsafeguardingchildren.org.uk

Acknowledgment

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Comments, Compliments or Complaints

The Patient Relations/Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Department provides confidential on the spot advice, information and support to patients, relatives, friends, and carers.

Contact Us

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Ask 3 Questions

Become more involved in decisions about your healthcare. You may be asked to make choices about your treatment. To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions:

1. What are my options?
2. What are the positives and negatives of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

How We Use Your Information

For details on how we collect, use, and store the information we hold about you, please see patient information leaflet, Ref. **Corp 006** How we use your information, this can be found on the Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website, see details on the front cover.

This leaflet is also available in audio, large print, braille, and other languages upon request.
For more information please ask in the department/ward.

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Advice on speaking with a child when a loved one is in hospital Bereavement Services

Parent/Guardian/Carer Information

The Patient Information Leaflets page on the Trust website is available on the link:
[https:// www.wvl.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets](https://www.wvl.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets)
or scan the QR code.



EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

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Introduction

If you are reading this, then the chances are that you are an important person in a child's life and you are about to try and explain to them that someone they love and perhaps who cares for them is very poorly in the hospital.

This is not an easy task and sometimes you too may need a little help to do this. You may be a parent, a grandparent or other significant member and you too may be struggling with your own emotions surrounding the situation. You may worry that you will cry in front of the child or you may not be able to "get your words out", or that you will even make things worse for the child – don't worry, you will not. It is important that children see you crying, worried and upset because this encourages them to be upset too and they understand that it is ok to cry and be sad.

Children know when adults aren't being truthful so it is important to try and be as truthful as you can with them. Often children know when something is wrong, because there are more visitors to the

house than usual, there are more telephone calls, and children are asked to go upstairs or leave the room whilst you deal with what is happening. Children may hear some of these conversations, even if you may think they haven't noticed and sometimes they try to put the bits of the puzzle together themselves – sometimes they get it right and sometimes they don't. That is why it is important to be as truthful as you can with them. If all the important people in the child's life can have the same story about why someone is very poorly, this will support them in trusting you.

Firstly, ask them what they understand has happened to their loved one – they may get it right but they may also get it wrong.

Try and answer their questions as honestly and truthfully as possible, but be child friendly – don't talk to them about medical terms which they won't understand.

Keep explanations simple like "mummy had an operation on her head or tummy and is having some medicine to try and

make it better" or "daddy has fallen and hurt his back and neck and needs an operation".

It is important that children are included as much as possible.

Get them to draw a picture or write a letter to take into hospital – this could be put up on the wall.

Encourage them to take in photographs of themselves with their loved one. They could record their voice on a mobile phone describing their day or perhaps singing a favourite song. They could choose a favourite teddy to keep their loved one company whilst they are in hospital.

You may need to let school or nursery know, so the child can access any support from teachers and staff.

If you feel that you really are unable to talk to a child then don't worry – you could ask a nurse to help you – what is important is that the child feels