

Clinical Guideline

SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE AND STANDARDS ON YOUNG WOMEN AGED UNDER 18 YEARS SEEKING NHS-FUNDED ABORTION IN THE BRISTOL, NORTH SOMERSET AND SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE AREA

SETTING	Bristol Sexual Health Services
FOR STAFF	Clinical staff
PATIENTS	Young Women aged under 18 years seeking NHS-funded abortion in the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire area

GUIDANCE

Background

This Guidance and the Standards outlined in this document are to supplement the South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures that relate to working with Sexually Active Young People, which can be found at: [REDACTED]

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, all young people have the right to confidential advice on contraception, condoms, pregnancy and abortion, including young people who are under 16yrs of age. It is the responsibility of professionals providing advice and treatment to help the young person make an informed choice about sexual health advice or treatment. This advice will include how they might discuss their concerns with a parent or carer, but the duty of confidentiality to the young person remains. Those providing advice or treatment should follow the Fraser Guidelines.

This Guidance and Standards document supports the procedure for referring a young woman to the Pregnancy Advisory Service, and outlines the Standards that will be applied once a referral to PAS has been made. It is for Pregnancy Advisory Service (PAS) staff, Healthcare providers referring into PAS e.g. Brook, Primary Care, Bristol Children's' and Young People's Services, Children's' Social Care and others working to South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures.

The Bristol Pregnancy Advisory Service is open-access, meaning that women do NOT need to get referred from a GP or other Healthcare Professional (HCP). **An appointment can be made by the woman herself - or by someone acting on her behalf - by calling [REDACTED]**. This avoids delays and increases access to an earlier and safer procedure where abortion is her choice. The service is happy to see any woman who is **considering** abortion and will give information as well as support where she is uncertain of her choices.

Any young woman who is registered with a GP in Bristol CCG, North Somerset CCG or South Gloucestershire CCG can access NHS-funded abortion as described below. Where she is not registered with a GP, she will be required to do so before the abortion is performed, but her referral to PAS should not be delayed.

A. Standards for the referring service

- 1. A specialist service referring a child or young person aged under-18 years will send an accompanying written referral (letter/fax/email confidentially) to the Pregnancy Advisory Service.**

A proforma for this written referral have been developed by the CaSH and Sexual Health Service and Brook to help ensure that all the relevant details are included – see appendix 2.

The proforma should indicate whether the referrer has phoned on behalf of the client to make an appointment with the booking service on [REDACTED] and, if made, the date of the appointment. The proforma should be emailed from an NHS.net account to the teenage pregnancy outreach account: [REDACTED]

This will be accessed daily.

- 2. If an under 16 year old is referred they should be encouraged to identify an appropriate supporting adult to accompany them to PAS. They should be seen at the earliest opportunity whether or not they can identify a supporting adult.**

This should be in addition to the proforma being sent. They should still be seen at the earliest opportunity (see 6&7 below.)

B. Standard for the abortion service provider (PAS)

- 1. All young women under 16 years seeking abortion will be seen by medical staff at some time during their assessment if proceeding to abortion.**
- 2. If an under 18 is referred by another service then PAS will give written feedback to that service outlining the outcome of the assessment with the young person's permission.**
- 3. If an under 18 is referred by another service then PAS will give feedback to that service and the GP (if permission is given) if the client fails to attend. (DNA Policy)**

A proforma has been developed to ensure that all the relevant details are included in the feedback – see appendix 3.

- 4. Where the young person permits no communication with the GP, the case should be discussed with the Consultant or Lead Nurse at PAS.**
- 5. Where a decision to continue with the pregnancy is made, a referral will be sent to the Young Persons Community Midwife. For Bristol and South Glos clients this will be done by the Outreach Nurse, North Somerset clients this will be done by PAS Nurses.**
- 6. Where appropriate and a need is felt, the safeguarding midwife at UHB/NBT/either trust is informed.**

- 7. Clients of any age attending for assessment should be advised that for 24 hours after their abortion procedure, they should have an adult with them who is aware of the abortion.**
- 8. For those aged 16 and 17 years we will ask them to name this “supporting adult”, and provide us with their contact details.**

If the named supporting adult is not with them at the assessment visit these contact details will be used prior to the procedure to ensure that arrangements to support the young person are in place.

If the young person is unable to identify a supporting adult there may be exceptional circumstances when it is in the young person’s best interest to proceed with the termination without a supporting adult. Clinicians should assess the client’s maturity, understanding and their social situation on an individual basis, and discuss with the PAS consultant. The PAS Consultant will be responsible for making the final decision as to whether a young person can have the termination without a supporting adult being identified and will document this decision.

- 9. For those under 16 years, we will ensure that the “supporting adult” is seen by a member of staff, provides the service with their contact details, and signs the consent form alongside the patient/child, to indicate their understanding of the abortion process.**

Where a young woman under 16 years attends the assessment visit without the appropriate adult support, a further visit will be required where they bring the supporting adult along. However, a provisional date for the abortion can and should be booked so that the procedure is not delayed unnecessarily.

The signature of the supporting adult on the consent form in this scenario is NOT an indication that they are consenting to the abortion for the young person, but that they understand about the risks of the procedure and the importance of care in the immediate post-abortion time-period.

- 10. The supporting adult should receive their own copy of the patient information leaflet that relates to the abortion procedure that is planned.**

If, following a second or subsequent PAS consultation, an under-16 year old cannot identify a supporting adult; they will require referral to Children’s Social Care.

This should be explained to the client and can be done by one of the medical or nursing team. The referring clinician and/or the GP should be copied into this referral as per 4 above.

Action if young person is NOT deemed to be competent to consent

If the young person is judged NOT to be competent to consent after a minimum of 2 consultations (i.e. does NOT meet the Fraser Guidelines), and there is no parent or carer to

give consent to the procedure, referral to Children's Social Care will need to be made, and the advice of a Community Paediatrician sought.

C. Standard for Children's Social Care

Where a young person is referred to Children's Social Care because they are unable to identify an appropriate "supporting adult", an Initial Assessment will be undertaken by a social worker to assess the young person's needs.

If the Referral of the Initial Assessment indicates a child protection concern, enquiries under Sec 47 of the Children Act 1989 will be initiated.

If the young person cannot be supported by the social worker to identify a "supportive adult" to attend a PAS assessment visit or for the abortion procedure if it proceeds, Children's Social Care will identify an appropriate adult to fulfil this support role.

Appendix 1 BNSSG Sexual Health Services Confidentiality Statement

Appendix 2 Proforma referral letter to Pregnancy Advisory Service

Appendix 3 Proforma outcome letter from Pregnancy Advisory Service

Appendix 4 DNA Letter to the GP

Appendix 5 Contact details for Childrens' Social Care services and Safeguarding Referrals

Appendix 6 Fraser Guidelines

-END-

Auditable outcomes

1. All young women under 16 years seeking abortion will be seen by medical staff at some time during their assessment if proceeding to abortion -100%
2. If an under 18 is referred by another service then PAS will give written feedback to that service outlining the outcome of the assessment-100%
3. If an under 18 is referred by another service then PAS will give feedback to that service and the GP if the client fails to attend-100%
4. Where the young person permits no communication with the GP, the case should be discussed with the Consultant or Lead Nurse at PAS-100%
5. For those under 16 years, we will ensure that the “supporting adult” is seen by a member of the PAS, provides the service with their contact details, and signs the consent form alongside the patient/child, to indicate their understanding of the abortion process-100%

Appendix 1: Confidentiality and Young people

Young people under 16 have the same right to confidentiality as adults. This forms part of our professional codes.

The current Unity poster reads as follows:

Here to listen, not to tell

We provide a confidential service to all our patients, including under 16's.

This means that you can tell others about this visit but we won't.

The only reason we might have to consider passing on confidential information without your permission, would be to protect you or someone else from serious harm. We would always try to discuss this with you first.

We sometimes suggest that we inform your GP of ongoing treatments or conditions. We would only write to your GP with your agreement.

If you have any worries about confidentiality, please feel free to ask a member of staff.

The duty of confidentiality is not however absolute. Where a health professional believes that there is a risk to the health, safety or welfare of a young person, which is so serious as to outweigh a young person's right to privacy, then information may be passed on to relevant agencies. Safeguarding the young person must be the priority.

In these situations disclosure would usually take place after discussion with the young person and offering to support information-sharing with their consent.

In practice, these situations are unusual in Unity Sexual Health and these cases must be discussed with colleagues and a senior doctor.

Further resources: DOH Gateway Guidance on providing sexual health service to under 16's see appendices.

Appendix 2

Pregnancy Advisory Service

Under 18yrs Supporting Information Form

For first appointment please telephone the central booking line:
 [REDACTED] **to access the Pregnancy Advisory Service.**


Then post, or email this supporting information form (to the details below)
 (If email, please send from an nhs.net account)

Please include as much detail as you can

<u>Post to:</u> Pregnancy Advisory Service Unity Sexual Health, Central Health Clinic Bristol BS2 0JD <u>Email:</u> [REDACTED] <u>Phone</u> [REDACTED] for subsequent appointments and PAS staff	From: Name of referring service Name of doctor / nurse
--	---

Name	
Date of birth and age	
Address	
Mobile number	
Alternative contact number e.g. friend	
GP practice.	
Ok to contact GP?	Yes/No
School or college attended	
Date of positive pregnancy test	
LMP	
Parents/ carers aware? If no, have they told another adult?	Yes/No If so who?
Date and time of PAS appointment	
Any other details	

Appendix 3

<p>University Hospitals Bristol  NHS Foundation Trust</p>	<div> </div> <p>Pregnancy Advisory Service Bristol Sexual Health Centre Central Health Clinic, Tower Hill Bristol BS2 0JD Tel: [REDACTED]</p>
<p>To:</p>	

Regarding:

Date:

Dear

The above patient was ☐ seen at PAS on _____
☐ DNA's her appointment at PAS on _____

She has been booked for ☐ medical abortion ☐ surgical abortion
on _____

at ☐ Southmead ☐ St Michael's ☐ Other _____
when she will be _____ + _____ (weeks + days)

Arrangements for follow-up at 2 weeks post-abortion are



☐ to see you ☐ please contact her to offer an appointment
on _____

☐ she will contact you for an appointment

☐ other _____

Her plan for contraception is

Appendix 4

<p>University Hospitals Bristol  NHS Foundation Trust</p>	<div>  <p>Be Informed. Be Safe. Be In Control.</p> </div> <p>Pregnancy Advisory Service Bristol Sexual Health Centre Central Health Clinic, Tower Hill Bristol BS2 OJD Tel: 0117 342 6824</p>	
<p>To:</p>	<div> <p>Regarding:</p> </div> <div> <p>Date:</p> </div>	

Dear

The above XX year old patient DID NOT ATTEND her [1st / subsequent] appointment at PAS on _____.

[Following an initial attendance on _____T/the] outreach team have tried on multiple occasions to contact her by text and phone [and letter].

The mobile number we have for her is [00000 000 000]

It appears she was initially [referred by XXX/ self-referred] and, from the limited information we have, it appears that she is X weeks pregnant.

Please note that she [did/ did not] give us permission to contact you as her GP.

In view of her age, the expectation is that you will now take on the further responsibility for trying to contact her in relation to pregnancy care.

We understand this is difficult and will be happy to try and help [including providing details of the phone/text/other contact that our service has had with her].

Contact details for Childrens' Social Care services and Safeguarding Referrals

For the right help in the right place and at the right time you can contact and ask to work out the best route for helping the child, young person and/or family. The contact details for social services and the forms for referral for support and safeguarding are available at-

For Bristol – <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/children-and-young-people/contact-childrens-services>

██████████ is the number for First Response

For South Gloucestershire -<http://www.sgccp.org>

██████████ is the number for First Response

For North Somerset-

_____ is the number for Single Point

For referral of Young people with substance misuse issues-

-If regularly using Class A drugs contact [REDACTED]

-For occasional use of Class A or Non-Class A drugs or alcohol and Cannabis

contact Bristol Drugs Project on 0 [REDACTED]

At UHB the Safeguarding Children and Young People 0-18 years, Contact the Child protection supervisor for our area- [REDACTED] on extension [REDACTED]. The link for the service is-

Appendix 6

Fraser Guidelines

The Fraser criteria:

- _ The young person understands the advice.
- _ The young person cannot be persuaded to inform her parents or to allow the clinician to inform them.
- _ It is likely that the young person will continue to have sexual intercourse with or without the use of contraception.
- _ The young person's physical or mental health may suffer as a result of withholding contraceptive advice or treatment.
- _ It is in the best interests of the young person for the clinician to provide contraceptive advice, treatment or both without parental consent.

QUERIES

Contact [REDACTED], Lead, Pregnancy Advisory Service, Bristol Sexual Health Centre, Bristol Tel. [REDACTED]