



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

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A Children & Young Person's Guide to the Minimum Standards for Independent Healthcare Establishments.

Children's version



Participation Network
Supporting the Public Sector to engage
children & young people



Introduction

Independent Healthcare Establishments are types of hospitals and clinics that are run by companies. There are different standards for hospitals and clinics that are run by the Health Service.

There are laws setting out what these hospitals and clinics have to do to be safe and provide good care for the people using them.

One of these laws says that these hospitals and clinics have to be registered and inspected and the minimum standards set out what the hospitals and clinics have to do.

There are lots of other laws and standards that hospitals and clinics have to meet as well to make sure their care is safe.

These standards are for:

- Hospitals where people are treated during the day or might stay overnight;
- Hospices where people are treated for very serious illnesses that mean they might not live for very long;
- Mental health hospitals where people stay for a while when their illness is affecting their feelings and their mind;





- Clinics that treat people who need medical help to have children;
- Clinics that provide machines to help people whose kidneys don't work very well. This is called dialysis - the person is linked up to the machine which does some of the jobs that kidneys do;
- Clinics that provide some types of oxygen therapy. Oxygen is one of the gases in the air that we breathe. Some doctors use a stronger type of oxygen than is in the air to help treat some conditions; and
- Clinics that use certain kinds of lasers or lights. These can be used to treat eyes or skin conditions. Some clinics use lasers to remove the hair on people's bodies.

Some of these services aren't used by children and young people, but some can be and this guide is designed to explain what the minimum standards say.

There are 67 standards in the book and to keep this guide as short as possible, we don't cover all of them in detail and have set out the guide in sections. If you are using any of these services, the doctor or nurse in the hospital or clinic will be able to give you more information.





Section 1 - Standards for Patients and Clients



Patients and clients are the people who use the service. To make it simple, in this guide we'll call them patients.

Patients have rights that must be understood and followed and these standards explain how this must be done.

These standards say that people thinking about using a hospital or clinic must have all the information they need to make sure they understand about their treatment before they make the decision to have it. All information must be written and explained in a way that patients can understand and should include pictures or easy words where they are needed.

Usually, the patient has to pay for the treatment they get and so they must understand the costs.

These standards set out how people are to be kept safe when they are in the hospital or clinic and what the staff must do if they think the patient is not safe either in the hospital or clinic or at home. There are extra rules for keeping children and young people safe that have to be followed.

There has to be a plan which shows how the patient will be cared for during their time in the hospital or clinic. This plan should explain the treatment the patient will get, any medicines or operations they will have and how they will be cared for when they are at home. The doctors and nurses must explain the plan so the patient understands what will be happening to them.

All the treatment has to be given safely and must be shown to be the best way of treating that particular patient. There are lots of different ways to help people when they are sick and as not everyone is the same the doctors and nurses must choose the best one for that person.

There must also be information that tells the patient how to make a complaint if they are not happy with the treatment they get.

There must be records and notes kept that explain all the treatments, medicines and any operations the patient has had. The records have to be kept safely.

Section 2 - Standards for Staff

These standards are about the people who look after patients in clinics and hospitals. There are lots of different people who work there and they must have passed the correct exams and had the right experience in doing their job before they can look after patients.

Some of the people who work in hospitals and clinics are explained below. There are lots of rules on how these people have to do their jobs and the manager of the hospital or clinic has to make sure the staff are following the rules.

If any mistakes are made, the manager has to know about them and try to make sure they don't happen again.

Doctors are specially trained to look after sick people. They might be experts in one kind of problem or area of the body. These are specialists or consultants.

Nurses are also specially trained and are part of the team in hospitals and clinics. They help with the treatment and make sure patients have everything they need.

Healthcare Assistants help the nurses by doing some checks on patients like perhaps taking their temperature. They also help by serving meals and making beds.

Pharmacists get medicines ready for patients.

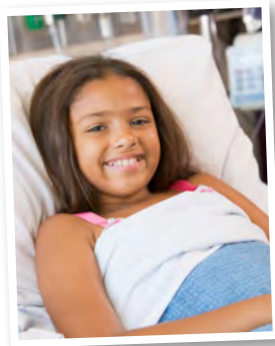
Play Specialists help children and young people understand what is happening in the hospital or clinic and give them fun things to do.

Anaesthetists are doctors. They put people to sleep so they don't feel anything when they're having an operation. After an operation the anaesthetist will give the patient medicines to make sure the patient doesn't have any pain.

There have to be enough staff to look after all the patients properly. The staff have to understand their jobs and know how to look after everyone well. They do this by getting the right training every year.

Sometimes there will be volunteers working in the hospital or clinic. Volunteers must know and understand their job and this must be explained to the patients too.





Section 3 - Standards for Managing the Hospital or Clinic

The manager of the hospital or clinic has a very important job to make sure everything is run properly.

There are lots of things they have to do to make sure that staff understand their jobs and that patients are looked after safely. If something goes wrong, the manager must know what to do and who to tell.

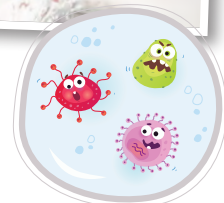
If something goes wrong, the manager must try to work out why it happened and what to do to make sure it doesn't happen again.

Section 4 - Standards for Keeping Things Clean

If germs like bacteria or viruses get into someone's body, they can cause an infection and make them sick. If that person is in a hospital or clinic because they are already ill, an infection can make them much worse.

These standards set out what has to be done to make sure the hospital or clinic and all the equipment used there is clean so as not to spread any germs or bacteria and cause infections.

Staff, patients and visitors must know what they have to do so as not to spread any infections. This includes washing hands properly and using special hand gels.



Section 5 - Standards for Buildings, Grounds and Equipment

As well as being clean, buildings and equipment must be safe.

If patients or visitors need help moving, for example by using a wheelchair, the buildings and grounds must be suitable for wheelchairs e.g. no steps or stairs.

There must be signs that patients can understand that show the important areas of the building and what to do if there is a fire.

The manager must make sure that all the staff know what to do if there is a fire or other emergency.

There is lots of equipment used in a hospital or clinic and it must be safe. Sometimes, the equipment has to be tested to make sure it works properly. The staff must know how to use the equipment properly and tell the manager if anything goes wrong.

Where patients stay overnight, there must be enough space for their beds and somewhere for them to wash and use the toilet in private.



Section 6 - Standards for Medicines

These standards explain what must be done to make sure patients get the right medicines at the right time.

The nurses and doctors must understand what the medicines do and explain this to the patient in a way they can understand.

Sometimes, a medicine can do something apart from what it's meant to. This is called a side effect. Sometimes these can be dangerous. Patients must understand what the side effects from their medicines might be and the doctor must explain what they should do if they get any side effects.

There are standards for how medicines must be stored and who is allowed access to them as well as for the records that have to be kept every time a patient gets medicine.



Section 7 - Standards for Hospitals, Hospices and Clinics



These standards are about the work that goes on in the hospital, clinic or hospice. There must always be a doctor available to help patients who need it - during the day and at night time.

There must be staff on duty who can help a patient when they stop breathing. This is called resuscitation and means that the patient's heart is restarted and they begin breathing again.

A doctor who gives a patient an operation is called a surgeon. Sometimes an operation is called surgery. Surgery is done in operating theatres.

If a patient has surgery, the surgeon must be trained and qualified. The operating theatre must have all the right equipment for the operation and the equipment must be checked to make sure it works properly.

The doctors and nurses must explain to the patient what will happen in their operation and how they might feel afterwards. They will also talk about the medicines they will get if they are in pain afterwards.

If the patients are children, the hospital, clinic or hospice must be safe and suitable for them. There should be special equipment, beds and medicines for children and the doctors and nurses must explain things in a way that children can understand.

If a child wants their parent to stay with them overnight, this must be allowed.

If children have to spend a long time in a hospital, there must be arrangements for them to keep up with their school work.

All the staff who work with children must be properly trained.

Some patients have tests at a hospital or clinic to find out what is wrong with them. Special laboratories look at blood or other samples to see what might be wrong. There are standards to make sure the tests are done properly and the results kept safe.

Sometimes, tests can show that a patient is very sick. When a doctor has to tell a patient and their family this, they must be careful to be kind and give all the information in a way they can understand.

When patients are very sick, the doctors are not always able to help them get better and these patients might die in the hospital or hospice.

If the doctors and nurses know that someone is not going to get better, they must explain this carefully to them and make sure they are comfortable and not in any pain.

When a patient dies, the doctors and nurses must help their family understand what has happened.





Section 8 - Extra Standards for Hospices

A hospice is a special type of hospital that looks after people who have illnesses that cannot be cured. Sometimes patients stay there when they are very, very sick and might die there. Sometimes, patients go to the hospice for a short while for some treatment and then go back home to their families.

When a patient goes to the hospice, they must be given all the information they need about their treatment. If they are only there for a short time, there has to be a plan to make sure they are looked after when they go home.

The doctors, nurses and other staff who care for the patients must work together as a team to make sure that they give the best care they can.

If the patient has died in the hospice, there must be help for their family to understand what has happened and help them with their feelings.

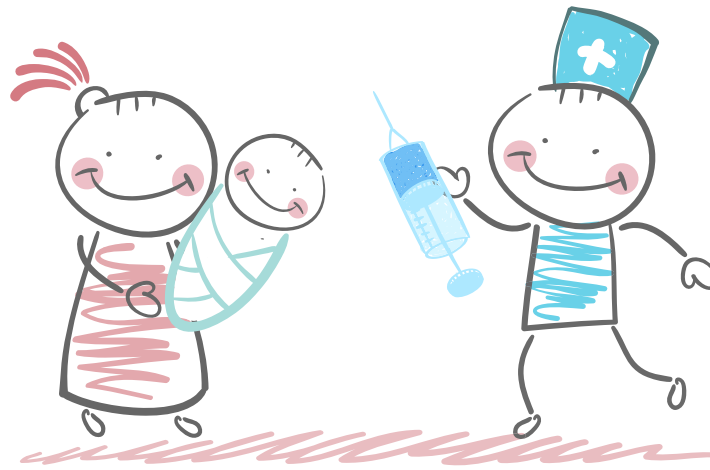
When children have to use a hospice, the doctors and nurses must explain their treatments in a way that they can understand. There must be help for children's parents and brothers and sisters to understand what will happen and how the hospice works.

The doctors and nurses will make sure that children are comfortable and not in any pain. They must work with the children and their parents to understand what the children like and dislike and how best to look after them.

If children have disabilities that mean they can't communicate or understand well, there must be arrangements to help them explain how they are feeling.

A hospice that looks after children must have the right type of furniture and equipment for them. There should be places for play and school work and the right staff there to make sure they are safe and well cared for.





Section 8 - Standards for Fertility Services

Sometimes, people need medical help to have children. The clinics that provide this help are called fertility services.

The standards say that the people working in these clinics must have the right training and qualifications in order to do their job well.

The clinic must have the right equipment which is clean and well looked after to make sure it works safely.

People using these clinics must understand what treatment they are getting and what the chances are of it working for them.

Section 9 - Standards for Lasers and Light Sources

Some types of laser or light can be used to treat people with skin conditions or remove the hair from their bodies.

When a clinic or hospital uses these types of lasers or lights, they must have the right sized rooms to make sure they are safe for the patient.

The staff using the lights or lasers must have been trained and look after the equipment to make sure it is safe.

The patients must understand what their treatment is and the chances of it working for them.

Section 10 - Standards for Dialysis

When someone's kidneys don't work properly, they might need dialysis to help them. In dialysis, a machine does some of the jobs that the patient's kidneys are meant to do.

These standards say that dialysis machines must be looked after to make sure they can work safely and that the staff using them must be properly trained.

There are lots of rules for dialysis and these standards say that the rules must be followed carefully.

Section 11 - Standards for Oxygen Therapy

Some patients have oxygen therapy to help with their condition. Oxygen therapy is given in a chamber which is a type of room.

The standards say that the chamber and equipment must be safe and well looked after and that the staff using it must have been trained properly.



Section 12 - Standards for Mental Health Hospitals

Mental health is about our feelings - whether we are happy or sad, secure or worried. Sometimes, people will have an illness that affects their mind or their feelings. If someone's mental health is bad, they might need to stay in a special type of hospital that looks after their mental health until they are better.

If someone has problems with their mental health, it might mean that they need extra help to understand their treatment. The doctors and nurses must make sure that the patient gets this extra help.

Sometimes, the patient will have a person whose job is to help them understand what is happening and to talk to the staff for them - this person is called an advocate.

These standards say that the doctors and nurses working there must be well trained and understand the needs of their patients.

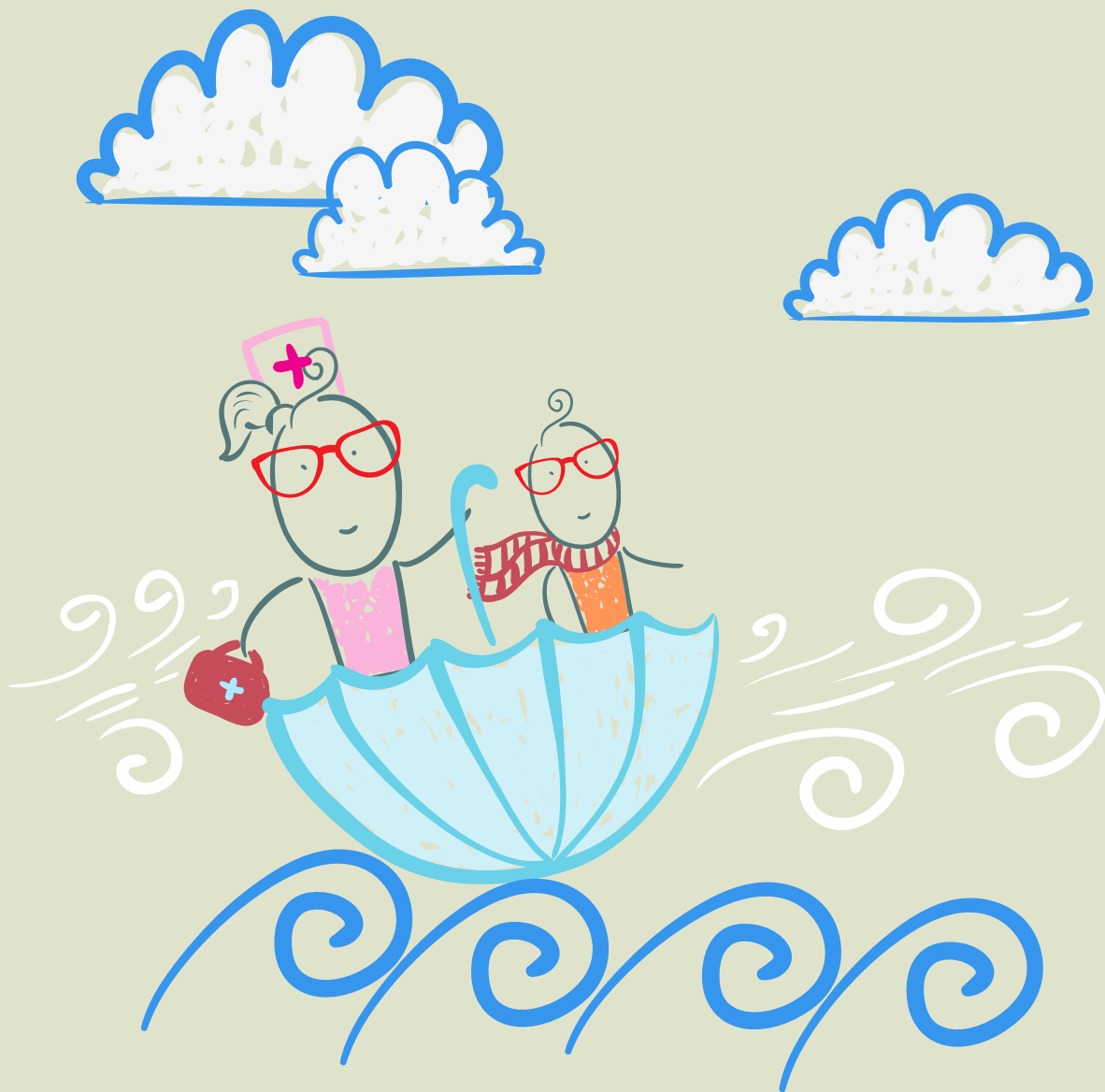
There are special types of treatment and medicines for mental health problems and the staff must explain these to the patient so that they understand what is happening.

There are laws about how some patients with mental health problems must be treated and what doctors and nurses can do to help them. The standards say that these laws must be followed.

When the patient is better, there must be a plan to make sure they understand how to keep well when they are at home and what to do if they become unwell again.

Section 13 - Standards for Registration

This section of the standards explains what the owners and managers of the hospital, hospice or clinic must do to be registered.



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