



Multiagency child death notification pathway

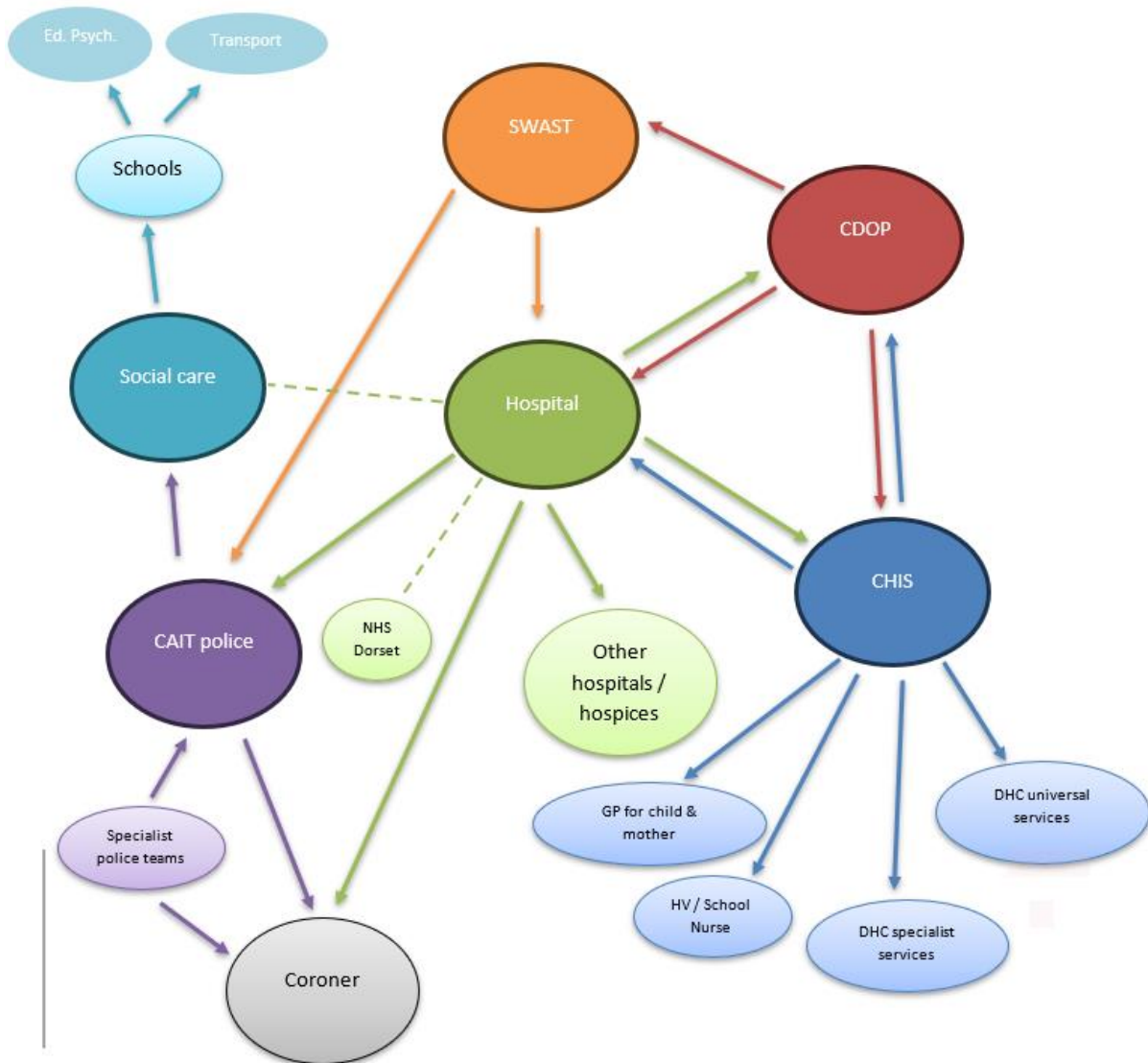
Version number	2
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Agreed by	Pan-Dorset Policies and Procedures Group
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All agencies are responsible for their own internal notification pathways.

INTRODUCTION

This pathway sets out a revised model for the multi-agency sharing of information following the death of a child aged 0 to 18 years. The pathway is intended to ensure that the fact that a child resident in Dorset, Bournemouth or Poole has died, is shared in a timely fashion so that key professionals or departments are informed and records updated. Some need to know within hours, and some by the next working day. It is important that the information is shared in accordance with the principles around patient confidentiality and the Data Protection Act. In most cases, the information should be passed once from a single source and not from multiple sources. The exception is the online notification form for CDOP, where multiple notifications are acceptable. There should be no gaps in the information sharing process which can result in untold upset for families and embarrassment for agencies. The information must be shared on a *'need to know'* and not on a *'nice to know'* basis.

This pathway sets out the multi-agency notification process and does not seek to influence individual agency cascade systems where pathways should be clearly defined using established internal communication networks.



Hospitals

Ambulance crews may declare death at the scene or transport a collapsed child to hospital during ongoing attempts at resuscitation. In this situation the ambulance control team alert the hospital and police. Most child deaths are declared in hospital. All children who die unexpectedly and are confirmed as deceased at home or in the community should be brought to the hospital for the child death investigation process to be initiated. The expected death of a child in the community will be known to the clinical team and the same notification process applies. The Designated Doctors for Child Death have overall responsibility for the process which follows the death of a child and are responsible for



ensuring the notification pathway is initiated. While some agencies must be contacted very promptly by the team managing the rapid response process, other notifications should be made by administrators by the next working day. Each hospital and agency needs their own internal process for disseminating the information about the child's death within their teams and record systems.

Designated Doctor for Child Death (through the hospital)

The Designated Doctor for Child Death, or the delegated professional should inform:

- Dorset Police CAIT Team for unexpected deaths as part of the rapid response process
- The Coroner – for certain types of death
- Child Health Information Service (CHIS) – for all deaths
- Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) Administrator – for all deaths
- Other hospitals known to be involved in the care of the child
- Check if known to the special care dentistry team
- Hospices known to be involved in the care of the child
- **For expected deaths** – inform social care if they have had any involvement with the family – it may be appropriate to do this during end of life care.

Notifications of death to the safeguarding team at NHS Dorset:

Notifications will be made by the hospital if

- There are / have been safeguarding concerns about the child / family
- The death is suspicious
- A serious incident notification is likely to be made
- Media interest is anticipated.

Police – for unexpected deaths.

- The CAIT team will inform the coroner of the death.
- They will liaise with social care and do background checks.
- There may need to be liaison with specialist police teams and a decision as to which team will take the lead.

Child Health Information Service (CHIS)

Child Health Information Service is part of Dorset HealthCare and is responsible for notifying relevant professionals and departments within the NHS during the next working day. **CHIS is not responsible for urgent weekend or out of hour's notifications.** As a



matter of course, CHIS will inform the child's/mother's GP and health visitor, where relevant, and the principal hospital responsible for the child's healthcare. Where the principal hospital is not known or is not obvious from the family's home address, initial enquiries will be made to establish this. Where this cannot be clarified, the notification may be sent to more than one hospital in the interests of expediency, but this should be avoided wherever possible. CHIS will also notify the relevant school nursing team if the child is of school age.

All services within Dorset Healthcare must be considered. This includes checking if a child was known to specialist services such as the Wheelchair service or incontinence service and other non-universal specialist teams.

CDOP Administrator

The CDOP Administrator will notify CHIS of every child death notification received which will also capture any Dorset children who die in hospitals outside of the county. The CDOP Administrator will also inform another CDOP when a child who is usually resident outside the County, dies within Dorset. The CDOP Administrator will notify the South West Ambulance Safeguarding Team of every child death in order that records can be checked for any previous contact with the child and family.

Social Care

It is the responsibility of the relevant local authority social care department to initiate internal arrangements to inform appropriate members of all Children's Services that a child has died. This includes the Children Who are Disabled team and the Early help services. Social Care will also ensure, where the child is of school age, that the head teacher at the relevant school is notified of the death. This will allow the head teacher to initiate the school's internal notification procedures and to allow the local authority to offer educational psychology support to members of staff. The school must check if the child used school transport and notify the team of the child's death if they did.

If the deceased child was at nursery or had siblings of nursery or school age the parents should be asked if they would like to tell the nursery or school themselves or if they would prefer social care to do this for them. The nursing team can be asked to check this with the family if it has not already been established during the rapid response process. Nurseries will need advice about sources of support available to them.

Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership



Geographical considerations:

Families may access health care from the hospital nearest home even if it is in a different local authority. The geographical boundaries for the provision of paediatric healthcare by the two paediatric centres at Dorchester and Poole are not co-terminus with the local authority boundaries. In broad terms, all households with a DT postcode are served by Dorchester and BH postcodes by Poole. However, households within the Purbeck area with BH postcodes may be served by Dorchester. Whilst this can be used as a guide to which hospital, and therefore which Designated Doctor would be responsible for a child, where the family reside within the Purbecks there will still need to be some discussion unless there is clarity from the outset.

Remember that although a child may reside within Dorset and a Dorset designated Dr will be responsible for ensuring the child death review process is followed, their medical care may have been led by Somerset, Wiltshire or Hampshire hospitals who must be informed of the death.

The designated Dr should liaise with their counterpart in neighbouring counties regarding the arrangements for the child death review process on a case by case basis.

CHILD DEATH NOTIFICATION PATHWAY CONTACT DETAILS

Location	Office hours – Monday-Friday 9am-5pm unless otherwise stated	Out of office hours
Dorset County Hospital	Safeguarding office: 01305 254748 Consultant on call: 01305 251150, ask for bleep 353	01305 251150, ask for bleep 523
University hospitals Dorset (Poole and Bournemouth)	Safeguarding office: 0300 019 2382 (main no. to use) Paediatric co-ordinator : 01202 665511 Bleep 0218 On call paediatric consultant 01202 665511 bleep 0693	Paediatric co-ordinator : 01202 665511 Bleep 0218

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Police CAIT team	01202 227190 – on call control room inspector’s team. They will contact the CAIT DS for you.	01202 227190 – on call control room inspector’s team. They will contact the CAIT DS for you.
Coroner Monday – Thursday 8am-4pm, telephone lines open 9am-4pm Friday 8am- 3.30pm, telephone lines open 9am-3.30pm.	01202 123900,	101
Dorset Children advice and duty service Office hours 8am-10pm	01305 228558	01305 228558 - automatically redirected to the on call duty manager out of hours.
Health MASH	Dhc.mash@nhs.net	
BCP Children's First Response Hub Monday to Thursday, 8:30am to 5:15pm Friday, 8.30am to 4.45pm	01202 123 334 childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk	01202 123 334
CDOP Monday-Thursday 0800-1400	cdop@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk 01305 221332	
CHIS	provide.chisdorset@nhs.net 0300 303 9996	