

DUDLEY CHILDREN’S SERVICES

CHILD DEATH (0-18) GUIDANCE

The death of a child is a devastating loss that profoundly affects all those involved. In the immediate aftermath of a child’s death, a copy of *When a Child Dies’ – a guide for families and carers* should be offered to all bereaved families or carers in order to support them through the child death review process (Hospital provides this). In addition to supporting families and carers, staff involved in the care of the child should also be considered and offered appropriate support. (WT18, ch5. p,93.)

Social work team tasks

- If an **unexpected** death of a child takes place must complete an ecdop notification online. A.Notification of Child Death online form via [www.ecdop.co.uk/QES/Live/Public](http://www.ecdop.co.uk/QES/Live/Public). Once you submit the form you will get a confirmation on your screen
- If the child has died in hospital, **Front Door** will be notified. Front Door to check if child/family known to us and share information into the initial Joint Area Response (JAR) process. Front Door will arrange a strategy meeting if necessary. Where possible a SW/TM will join the police and the JAR Nurse 'on call' in the 'walk through' home visit to the family home.
- Good Practice:** Where the deceased child or siblings have been known to CSC recently  
  
Children's Services are involved as early as possible and attend the **home visit** with the on rota **JAR Nurse** (SUDIC trained) and enable social workers to build relationships with family, through early support.
- If a child dies **unexpectedly** out of hours in hospital, the hospital or Police will inform **EDT** - Ensure that you get Police **SIO** details & **Consultant Paediatrician** is aware. Strategy meeting considered to agree safety plan for siblings and a s.47 discussion with on call EDT Manager. **Complete ecdop**. EDT will be invited to join Police and JAR Nurse at the initial **JAR info sharing meeting**. There is a JAR Nurse on call all year round 9-5pm
- Child deaths triggering a JAR (formerly known as Rapid Response Meeting) will be unexpected and require immediate multi-agency information sharing. The JAR must be attended by the allocated **SW** and **TM**. If the deceased child was not allocated, then a CSC rep is required at the JAR from **Assessment Team &/or EDT**. (if the child died out of hours).
- Social Worker/EDT** to complete Briefing form for Senior Managers, **DCS, AD and Head of Safeguarding**. Form to be completed (within 24hrs) whether the child was known to CSC prior to the death or whether abuse or neglect is suspected at the outset. Information within the Briefing form may be used to complete notification to e.g National Safeguarding Panel (if abuse or neglect is suspected)  
  
Rachel Oliver at [rachel.oliver@dudley.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.oliver@dudley.gov.uk).

**Further Reading**  
Working Together 18 Chapter 5  
Child Death Review Statutory and Operational Guidance 2019

Guidance Notes/ Partners input

- If the child has died in hospital, the **paediatrician** will complete the ecdop. The A.Notification of Child Death will be picked up by the **Child Death Nurse** (Clare Acton) Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust. ([cacton@nhs.net](mailto:cacton@nhs.net))
- An unexpected death is defined as the death of an infant or child which was not anticipated as a significant possibility 24hrs before the death or a still born where no health care witnessed the birth or where a precipitating incident led to the death e.g road traffic accident.
- have an early information sharing meeting to inform the **Joint Agency Response (JAR)** meeting. A JAR Nurse in on duty  
**If in any doubt you can always contact the JAR Nurse on duty - via switchboard at DGNHSFT**
- SUDIC** protocol - Consultant Paediatrician on duty will look at the deceased child to identify any safeguarding concerns and take SUDIC samples. This will involve the Police as a minimum. A history will be taken from parents. If this raises a concern of a criminal element, the JAR process will cease and the police will take over
- The **JAR** is a multi-agency meeting involving a West- Mids Police Senior Investigation Officer (SIO), A&E, Ambulance Service, GP's, CSC, Health Visitor and the Coroner. The JAR meeting will also access professionals from specialist agencies as necessary to support the core team. The JAR will discuss the circumstances of the death, determine who will support the family and ensure that there are no safeguarding concerns for other children in the family. The JAR is arranged and chaired by the **Named Paediatrician** or if unavailable, the Child Death Nurse. If there are suspicious circumstances, the Police may chair. Within 48-72hrs (2-3 working days) - JAR information meeting to take place. **Child Death Nurse** to inform Child Death Administrator by email of the child and all agencies/contacts who should be invited to the JAR. Dudley Group NHS FT to send Form B - Reporting Form by email to agencies to complete with information about the child and family and send back within 5 days.
- full and sufficient medical cause is immediately available **do not** require a JAR but will need to be referred to Child Death Overview Panel CDOP by the Hospital. CDOP looks at learning from child death. Child Death Review Meetings take place 6 weekly at DGNHSFT for local learning.