

Managing Children with Health Care Needs in the Community

Introduction

This protocol is designed to ensure that children and young people living in the community who have complex health needs, which as a consequence require additional support and / or care within the community. This includes schools and other settings

It provides a framework for a consistent response to the needs of children and young people in a confidential and respectful way to ensure that they have the opportunity to participate in all aspects of community life. This includes children who are dependant on their parents / carers / nurses carrying out an invasive clinical procedure which is essential either as part of their routine care or within expected emergency management. For example - children requiring gastrostomy feeds; oxygen therapy or assistance to manage diabetes

The focus of this protocol is to:

1. Demonstrate a commitment to positively promoting the inclusion of all children with complex health needs and improving efficient multi-agency working in partnership with children and families.
2. Clarify roles, responsibilities and accountability in enabling children with complex health needs to live at home in the community
3. Provide a framework within which to manage the risks associated with carrying out clinical procedures that relate to the child, the worker and the organisation.
4. Children and young people may present with a range of needs, some of which will require clinical interventions. The skills required to meet these needs may:
 - Be routine and easily carried out by the parents
 - Require training from health personnel
 - Require complex Clinical procedures, which should only be carried out by trained health professionals

Roles and responsibilities

Family:

Staff working in settings work in partnership with parents / guardians who are the legal guardians of their child and have parental responsibility and may where appropriate provide consent to treatment and care on behalf of their child. Parents also have a responsibility to effectively engage with Myhomecare in relation to their child's health care needs.

Myhomecare:

- Myhomecare should ensure that the child and their parents are able to fully participate and contribute throughout the process to develop the relevant care plan and are kept informed and updated about their child's health needs.

- Accountability for the provision of care rests with Myhomecare. Procedures, policies and professional codes of conduct should include clarity around management supervision, training and review.
- Myhomecare is required to take out employers' liability insurance to provide cover for staff acting within the scope of their employment.
- Myhomecare is responsible for ensuring that they employ staff with job descriptions written to cover the tasks required to support this group of children, or have staff who are trained and willing to undertake the tasks.
- Myhomecare will be responsible for the management of homecare staff, supervision and training of workers undertaking clinical tasks and the review of these clinical tasks when it is assessed and agreed that these are to be provided to the child.
- Myhomecare will ensure that the homecare worker will be appropriately qualified and experienced to undertake this role and can provide a record of the training delivered, and identify when re- training or updating will be required.
- Myhomecare will carry out regular reviews. This is assessed by our Nurse Assessor and once the change in need is identified to them, care plans are updated accordingly.

Risk management and assessment

There is an element of risk involved with many of the tasks carried out to support children with complex health needs. These risks cannot be removed completely, but it is possible to manage them.

For staff, risk management will ensure that:

- Tasks are carried out in the safest way possible
- Any risk to staff is minimised.

For children, risk management will ensure that:

- They are not exposed to unacceptable risks
- They can take part and enjoy all the activities of the school or other setting.

As part of a risk management process all children with complex needs will have an assessment, assessment tools including risk assessments and care plans, specific to their particular needs. The care plan should:

- Clarify for staff, parents/carers and children the level of support a child will receive in any setting
- Identify who is responsible for each task or procedure relating to a particular child
- Identify required training for particular procedures and who will carry out the training.

Expected outcomes

- Children and young people with complex health needs are fully included in schools, early years and other community settings.
- Parents/carers should feel confident that their child's health care needs will be managed safely.
- Staff in community settings feel confident and fully supported in meeting health care needs of children and young people.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The management of children with health care needs in community settings will be monitored at a number of levels.