



Consent, Safeguarding & Confidentiality Policy (Paediatrics)

Author	Medisonal Ltd
Policy Lead	Dawn Thompson
Version No.	1.0
Date of issue	May 2025
Date to be reviewed	May 2026
Not controlled once printed	

Introduction

Medisonal Limited is committed to ensuring the highest standards of care, safety, and ethical practice when working with children and young people. This policy outlines our approach to **consent, safeguarding, and confidentiality** in paediatric services, ensuring compliance with legal, regulatory, and ethical standards.

This policy applies to all healthcare professionals working within Medisonal Limited who are involved in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of children and young people. It provides a clear framework for obtaining valid consent, managing safeguarding responsibilities, and upholding confidentiality while balancing the duty to protect children at risk.

This policy is aligned with **Children Act 1989 & 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), NICE guidance, GDPR, and CQC regulatory standards.**

Consent in Paediatric Care

Legal Framework for Consent

Under UK law, children under 16 can provide consent for medical treatment if they are deemed **Gillick competent**, meaning they have sufficient understanding to make an informed decision. For children who are not deemed competent, consent must be obtained from a parent or legal guardian. Young people aged **16–17** are presumed to have capacity to consent under the **Family Law Reform Act 1969**.

Consent Process

Healthcare professionals must:

- Assess the child's understanding using **Gillick Competency principles**.
- Provide clear, age-appropriate explanations of the assessment, treatment options, and risks.
- Obtain informed consent from the child (if competent) or a parent/legal guardian.
- Document the consent discussion and decisions in the medical record.
- Respect the child's right to **refuse treatment**, while ensuring safeguarding responsibilities are upheld.

Where a child refuses treatment but is considered at risk of harm, **best interest decisions** will be made in line with the **Children Act 1989** and discussed with parents, safeguarding leads, and external agencies if necessary.

Safeguarding Children & Young People

Safeguarding Responsibilities

Medisonal Limited has a **statutory duty** to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. All staff working with children must adhere to **safeguarding legislation and best practice**, including:

- **Children Act 1989 & 2004** (legal framework for safeguarding children).
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)** (inter-agency safeguarding guidance).
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)** (for school-related cases).

Recognising Safeguarding Concerns

Children with ADHD and neurodevelopmental conditions may be at an increased risk of **neglect, exploitation, emotional harm, or abuse**. Clinicians must be vigilant in identifying safeguarding risks, which may include:

- **Unexplained injuries or inconsistent explanations.**
- **Signs of emotional distress**, anxiety, or self-harm.
- **Parental neglect or failure to attend appointments.**
- **Concerns regarding medication misuse or coercion.**
- **Behavioural signs of domestic abuse, bullying, or exploitation.**
- **Vulnerability to social isolation, coercion, and manipulation due to impulsivity and difficulty interpreting social cues.**

If safeguarding concerns arise, staff must **escalate immediately** to the **Safeguarding Lead**, and referrals must be made to **local authority safeguarding teams** where appropriate.

Cyberbullying & Online Safety

Children with ADHD and other neurodivergent conditions are at an increased risk of **cyberbullying, online grooming, and digital exploitation** due to impulsivity and difficulties with understanding social risks. Medisonal Limited is committed to **supporting children and families** in managing these risks.

Key measures include:

- Educating children and parents on **online safety and digital wellbeing**.
- Providing guidance on **safe internet usage, privacy settings, and recognising signs of online exploitation**.
- Signposting families to **reliable online safety resources** and support networks.
- Encouraging multi-agency collaboration where online safety concerns are identified as a safeguarding risk.

Healthcare professionals should include **digital safety assessments** in consultations where relevant, ensuring children and parents understand how to navigate online spaces securely.

Escalation & Reporting Process

- **Immediate Risk:** Call emergency services (999) if a child is in immediate danger.
- **Serious Concern:** Report concerns to the **Local Authority Safeguarding Team** via the NHS Safeguarding App.
- **Internal Reporting:** All concerns must be documented and reported to the **Medisonal Safeguarding Lead**.
- **Multi-Agency Coordination:** Engage with GPs, schools, social services, and CAMHS where required.

All staff must complete **Level 3 Safeguarding Training** and participate in regular updates to ensure compliance with current guidance. In cases where a child is at **immediate risk of harm**, staff must contact **emergency services (999) or the local safeguarding team immediately**. Any disclosures of abuse, neglect, or exploitation will be recorded accurately and escalated appropriately following Medisonal Limited's safeguarding procedures.

Confidentiality & Information Sharing

Confidentiality in Paediatric Care

Confidentiality is fundamental to patient trust but must be balanced with safeguarding obligations. Young people aged **16+** have the same confidentiality rights as adults. For those under 16, confidentiality is respected where they are **Gillick competent**. However, in cases where safeguarding concerns arise, confidentiality may be overridden in the child's best interests.

When to Share Information

Healthcare professionals must share information where:

- There is a **risk of significant harm** to the child.
- **Legal requirements mandate disclosure** (e.g., court orders, statutory duties).
- Information is required for **multi-agency safeguarding purposes**.

Parents or legal guardians have the right to access their child's medical records unless the child objects and is deemed competent to decide under **Gillick Competency principles**. Healthcare professionals must balance **confidentiality with safeguarding responsibilities**, ensuring that children's rights are upheld while acting in their best interests.

How Information is Shared

- **Consent-based sharing:** If appropriate, children and parents should be informed when information is shared.
- **Without consent:** If obtaining consent could place a child at risk, information will be shared without consent following safeguarding protocols.
- **GDPR-compliant processes:** All disclosures must follow **Data Protection Act 2018** and **CQC confidentiality standards**.

Training & Staff Responsibilities

All staff working with children must complete **mandatory safeguarding training (Level 3)** and regular refresher courses. The **Registered Manager** and **Safeguarding Lead** are responsible for ensuring compliance with safeguarding procedures, reporting, and staff competency in consent and confidentiality matters.

All staff working with children and young people will undergo an **enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check** prior to employment. Staff will also receive **mandatory safeguarding training**, with refresher courses provided at regular intervals to ensure compliance with the latest statutory guidance.

Review & Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed **annually** to ensure compliance with updated legislation, regulatory guidance, and best practice. Audits will be conducted to assess adherence to

consent, safeguarding, and confidentiality standards within Medisonal Limited's paediatric services.

References

- **Children Act 1989 & 2004** – Legal framework for safeguarding children.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)** – Multi-agency safeguarding guidance.
- **NICE Guidelines NG87 & NG205** – ADHD assessment & safeguarding responsibilities.
- **Family Law Reform Act 1969** – Legal framework for consent in young people.
- **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) & Data Protection Act 2018** – Confidentiality and information sharing.

This policy ensures that Medisonal Limited maintains the highest standards in **consent, safeguarding, and confidentiality** when working with children and young people, promoting safety, ethical practice, and patient trust.