



Our Children, Our Future
**A Strategy for
Protecting Children**

MARCH 2010

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Principles
3. Policy Context
4. Assessing the Need
5. Achievements
6. Governance
7. Partnership
8. Strategic Direction

Appendices

Group Membership	I
Organisational Chart	II
References	III

Our Children, Our Future

Working in partnership to protect our children and young people.

Introduction

Child Protection is a high priority for NHS Grampian. Although much progress has been made since we developed “Towards a Child Protection Strategy” in 2003, we believe that much more can be done to protect our children and young people. Abuse, neglect and vulnerability continue to be significant issues across all parts of Grampian.

The purpose of this strategy is to:

- Reinforce NHS Grampian’s commitment to protecting children and young people.
- Create a culture where child protection is everybody’s business.
- Provide direction to staff to ensure a competent confident workforce.
- Share our commitment with partners, children and young people.
- Set out our priorities for the future.
- Establish continuous improvement and self evaluation processes where the rights of the child are the focus.

We are committed to making improvements so that:

- Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.
 - Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
 - We improve the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.
- (Extracted from the concordat between COSLA and the Scottish Government)

Improving Child Protection requires us all to work together in partnership – clinical staff, support staff, managers and most importantly children and young people themselves, their parents, families and carers.

NHS Grampian participates fully in the North East of Scotland Child Protection Committee. This is the key local body for developing and implementing child protection strategy across and between agencies.

We are determined to support our children and young people to grow into healthy adults. We can do this through the work we are undertaking on the NHS Grampian priorities - improving health and addressing inequalities, improving patient safety and experience, stimulating and supporting change and innovation and empowering staff and patients.

We will make sure that our staff are trained appropriately and supervised. We will work with children, their parents and carers to develop active and on-going communication. We are committed to working with our partners in the local authority, the police and the voluntary sector. Our children are our future and we are determined to make their future safe.

The Health Workforce



2. Principles

- **Leadership**

Strong, visible leadership will be embedded at all levels of the organisation.

- **Creating a culture where the protection of children is seen as important**

A culture of learning, openness and support will help staff to identify and share concerns, ask questions and report events. This will require strong and visible leadership at all levels.

- **Priorities**

In line with the priorities of NHS Grampian, the service to protect children will actively target families where health inequalities, parental substance misuse or domestic abuse is an issue. Preventative strategies are put in place where possible.

- **Empowering staff**

NHS Grampian is committed to encouraging staff to develop their skills in terms of being able to support families, enhance the wellbeing of children, assess risk, ask questions and work confidently in a multi-agency environment.

- **Education and development of staff**

The skills and competencies of staff will be developed through the implementation of the child protection training strategy.

- **Increasing public participation**

NHS Grampian aims to involve the public when planning and putting in place protection services for children and families. This also

means that staff will aim to involve and seek the views of children and families when assessing, planning their care, working with them and then reviewing effectiveness of actions and plans.

- **Working with partners**

The safety of children will only be achieved if all agencies work together. NHS Grampian is already working with others and forming joint plans and services, but will continue to improve its involvement and engagement with other agencies so that a single co-ordinated system of care for children and families is achieved.

- **Applying evidenced based practice**

NHS Grampian is committed to applying the best evidence to improve child safety. Recent developments in the field of child protection will be applied across the organisation to improve the protection and safety of children. We encourage appropriate research and audit in all of our services.

- **Learning from and sharing lessons**

The service aims to identify learning from the national case reports and apply them to ensure the same situations cannot be repeated in Grampian.

- **Sharing information**

NHS Grampian aims to ensure that there is appropriate communication of information between children and families, professionals and other agencies, according to the Information Sharing guidance.

- **Building capacity**

It is important that sufficient numbers of suitably educated staff are working in the correct areas of the service to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. The NHS Grampian Workforce Strategy will assist us in achieving this.

- **Continuous improvement**

It is essential that services continually improve on the care, advice and support they provide. This will be achieved by complying with standards, applying best practice, learning from outcomes and lessons, analysing information and performance management.

- **Communication**

A wide range of communication support arrangements are in place to support effective two way communication. These include face to face interpreters and the Language Line telephone interpretation system for children, parents and carers who do not speak English. Grampian also has facilities to support communication for the deaf.

Protecting Children and Young People: The Charter



3. Policy Context

“For Scotland’s Children” (2001) set out the then Government’s intention to improve services for vulnerable children through better integration of services across agencies. A child protection audit and review “It’s Everyone’s Job to Make Sure I’m Alright” was published in 2002. The report made 17 recommendations on how children could be better protected.

Child Protection remains, for all agencies, on agendas at the highest level. The Scottish Government has agreed 15 national outcomes with NHS Grampian and partner agencies. Three are specific to children and young people:

- Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.
- Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed.
- We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk.

There is a national commitment to:

- The Early Years Framework (Children up to 8).
- Getting it right for every child (Multi-Agency Policy).
- We Can and Must Do Better (Looked After Children).
- Hidden Harm (Substance Misuse).
- Responding to Domestic Abuse.

- Health for All Children (HALL 4) (Health Services for Children).
- Framework for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.
- Framework for Standards – Protecting Children and Young People.

The inspection process under the auspices of Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education (HMIe) has been completed for all areas served by NHS Grampian. Reports are in the public domain and this process of multi-agency inspection will be continuous.

The Early Years Framework (2008) brings increased pressure for agencies to prioritise services to children and families, targeting the most vulnerable. It is consistent with the direction already set by “Better Health Better Care” and “Equally Well”.

4. Assessing the Need

NHS Grampian provides health services to the populations of Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray. The population distribution is approximately 38%, 45% and 17% respectively. Grampian forms 10% of Scotland's total population.

The area is mixed urban and rural. It is largely prosperous with low unemployment. However, a more detailed community profile indicates pockets of extreme deprivation in all three local authority areas. Locally there is a sense that deprivation indices do not reflect rural poverty accurately.

In line with many areas in Scotland, the Grampian population is set to decrease by 5% in the next 15 years. Migration between the three local authority areas will see a decline in the population of Aberdeen City and a growth of 8% in Aberdeenshire and 3.7% in Moray. The childhood population aged 0-15 is projected to decrease. This is in line with the rest of Scotland where only three areas are expected to see growth.

Population Aged Under 16 Years in Grampian: 2000-2007

Year	Aberdeen		Shire		Moray		Grampian	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
2000	19783	18756	24387	23040	9070	8675	53240	50471
2001	17868	16822	24443	23129	8980	8508	51291	48459
2002	17501	2032	24192	22854	8855	8260	50548	47521
2003	17202	16241	23899	22713	8796	8166	49897	47120
2004	17013	15958	23840	22623	8590	7993	49443	46574
2005	16912	16004	23795	22488	8326	7865	49033	46357
2006	16863	15792	23831	22471	8264	7697	48958	45960
2007	16945	15883	23855	22440	8217	7591	49017	45914

In contrast to these figures, birth registrations are on the increase. The decline in birth registrations flattened out in the early 2000s and is now showing an increase. In 2007, Grampian achieved a level not seen since 1995. The year on year increase from 2006 to 2007 was 7.4%.

Birth Registrations in Grampian and its Council Areas: 2000-2007

Year	Aberdeen	Aberdeenshire	Moray	Grampian
2000	2088	2320	912	5320
2001	2097	2247	869	5213
2002	2098	2326	876	5300
2003	2003	2368	824	5195
2004	2075	2388	854	5317
2005	2061	2465	878	5404
2006	2200	2589	899	5688
2007	2417	2690	1001	6108

Some of the growth in birth registration in the last three years can be attributed to immigration from Eastern Europe. There has also been an increase in births to mothers from the rest of the world accounting for 8% of Grampian births in 2007. More detailed information on birth registrations is contained within the Maternity Services Clinical Management Board Annual Report 2007.

An annual analysis of data from the specialist child protection team including referral patterns, significant case reviews, information and training delivery, has the potential to identify trends which could inform the future direction of services and resources allocation.

The North East of Scotland Child Protection Committee has conducted 13 significant case reviews and participated in one review with a London authority. The first review occurred in 2003 with a review into the death of Carla Nicole Bone. Of these 14, three related to infant deaths due to serious head injury. Two deaths were of adolescents as a result of substance misuse.

There were 329 children on the North East of Scotland Child Protection Committee Register at

March 2009. This is the highest number since data was first recorded in this manner in 1999. The most common reasons for being on the register were physical neglect followed by emotional abuse. 135 of the 329 children were affected by parental substance misuse.

Child Protection Statistics: April 2008 to March 2009

Children registered following a case conference: by category of abuse/risk identified by conference as at 31 March 2009.

Physical neglect is a common feature. Emotional abuse is increasingly identified as a reason for being on the Child Protection Register however ALL forms of abuse are recognised as having an adverse emotional effect on children. Parental substance misuse and domestic abuse are significant factors in the majority of cases. Health services need to reflect these issues and ensure appropriate therapeutic interventions are available.

	ABERDEEN CITY	ABERDEENSHIRE	MORAY	NESCPC
EMOTIONAL ABUSE	60	34	18	112
PHYSICAL ABUSE (INJURY)	25	16	9	50
PHYSICAL NEGLECT	84	24	35	143
SEXUAL ABUSE	13	7	4	24
FAILURE TO THRIVE	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	182	81	66	329

Matters for Concern

Children can be at risk through:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Neglect

You may see or hear things which make you worry about a child's care, welfare or safety.

If you have any such concerns, you must do something about them.

Extracted from reference card "Protecting Children - a Commitment from NHS Grampian"



5. Achievements

The document “Towards a Child Protection Strategy for NHS Grampian” (2003) listed actions to be considered under three headings:

- Accountability.
- Communication.
- Training.

Since this document was published, NHS Grampian has made much progress against the issues highlighted.

Accountability

NHS Grampian has consolidated the position of Executive Lead at NHS Board level as well as the role of Designated Doctor as an advisor. Specialist nursing has an increased profile with the appointment of a nurse consultant. A specialist nurse to support the health needs of looked after children has been established. A general manager is now in place supporting the secondary care children’s service. A consultant paediatrician with a special interest is now in place working with the Designated Doctor.

Reporting structures have been reviewed and a Protecting Children (Health) Group has emerged from what was the Child Protection and Vulnerable Children Action Group. This group is chaired by the Executive Lead for Child Protection. The group is accountable to the cross system Unified Management Group. Community Health Partnerships have established clear leads for children’s services as well as networks for child health. The Critical Incident structure is now cross system.

A Child Protection Quality Group has been established. This means that all areas of Grampian children’s services come together, cross system, to ensure compliance with national standards, prepare for inspections, set key performance indicators and implement a range of quality measurement tools. Administrative support has increased.

Training

An in-house NHS Training Co-ordinator post has been established. Forty cascade trainers are in place to deliver level 1 training. These trainers receive an annual review and update.

The majority of new NHS Grampian staff attend induction training which includes level 1 basic awareness of issues and how to report concerns. This covers mental health, community, maternity and child health appointments.

Training at level 2 is available on a multi agency basis for staff who may be required to attend child protection case conferences.

Training for GPs has also been established – both those in training and in practice.

Training attendance is reviewed as part of overall performance review of child health services.

Communication

There have been developments in the establishment of link nurses and doctors at the sites of Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital, Aberdeen Maternity Hospital, Royal Cornhill Hospital and Dr Gray's Hospital. NHS Grampian has well established links with NHS Orkney and NHS Shetland.

NHS Grampian has formed strong links with the North East of Scotland Child Protection Committee and participates fully in the committee work.

Consent and confidentiality training is widely available on a single and multi-agency basis to staff. This supports the integrated assessment process. A protecting children advice card has been distributed via payroll.

Improved information on the guidance for the examination of children suspected of being abused

is now available. Admission and discharge protocols have been reviewed. The 'missing children' protocol is established. The family record is in place for vulnerable families. The child protection register is available in Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital. Guidelines are in place for the substance misuse service to make referrals to appropriate services.

A Child Protection Working Group for mental health services has been established.

A number of different services have formed specific groups to evaluate current practices, and to share and debate the needs of vulnerable children.



6. Governance

The NHS Board confirmed the requirement to manage and govern children's service across the care continuum of prevention, promotion, treatment and care. A Unified Management Group for child health manages this task. Membership is drawn from community, secondary care and mental health. (See Appendix I) All other child health operational groups are accountable to the Unified Management Group. The Group is chaired by the General Manager of secondary care child health.

In line with "Plans for Immediate Action" in 2003, NHS Grampian established an executive director with lead responsibility for Child Protection. This post advises the NHS Board and the Clinical Governance Committee, on all relevant issues. A Protecting Children (Health) Group is well established with cross system membership including adult services. This group is chaired by the Executive Lead for Child Protection.

The Child Protection Quality Group promotes continuous improvement in the standards of care for child protection. This involves working towards

the quality indicators within "It's Everyone's Job to Make Sure I'm Alright". The purpose of the group is to implement a plan of work, based on the direction contained in this strategy, Inspection recommendations, national influences and the plans of the North East of Scotland Child Protection Committee. The group also considers any training that might be required, implements and monitors a range of key performance indicators and considers the recommendations of any local, or national, incident investigations and applies them to Grampian.

A Child Health Strategic Management Group has met quarterly since 2000, chaired by the Strategic Co-ordinator for Child Health. This post also fulfils the role of Children's Commissioner. Membership of this group is also shown at Appendix I.

7. Partnership

NHS Grampian is committed to the policy of integrated working, believing this improves service planning and delivery to children and their families. A planning framework across Community Health Partnerships and local authorities exists. In terms of child protection, the North East of Scotland Child Protection Committee is the parent body. The chair of the committee reports to the Chief Officers Group, which includes Grampian Police.

Under the auspices of Community Planning, each local authority area produces an integrated children's services plan and has a multi-agency planning structure to support this. Each local authority has its own child protection subgroup. Managers and clinical staff, of NHS Grampian, are active participants in this process.

Staff partnership is set in the wider context of NHS Grampian. The Strategic Management Group and the Unified Management Group have staff representation. In addition, specific projects, involving significant change, will have staff representation within their membership working arrangements.

Action for Sick Children has a seat on the Child Health Strategic Management Group, representing

children and families. In addition, topic specific projects will involve, on a short term basis, relevant focus groups eg cancer review. This provides for a more targeted and meaningful involvement.

The North East of Scotland Child Protection Committee has three major process functions covering Public Information, Continuous Improvement and Strategic Planning. To organise its business, the committee has adopted a portfolio system of allocating work. There are six portfolios which cover:

- Training.
- Operations and Practice.
- Communications.
- Continuous Improvement.
- Governance.
- Significant Case Review.

NHS Grampian has responsibility for the Significant Case Review portfolio. A robust system has been developed for conducting multi-agency reviews, ensuring recommendations are addressed and learning is facilitated.



8. Strategic Direction

Addressing abuse, neglect and child protection continues to be a significant priority for NHS Grampian and its partner agencies and is embedded in all we do. Section 5 details a great deal of progress since 2003 but there is more work to be done to fulfil our prime aim of protecting children in Grampian.

The Protecting Children (Health) Group will support the organisation to improve our services in the following ways.

Accountability

- The Chief Executive and the Executive Lead will ensure strong leadership within the organisation.
- We will ensure all our staff understand their responsibilities to communicate and share the right information.

Governance

- We will produce regular reports for the Clinical Governance Committee and the NHS Board on our performance.
- We will ensure safe recruitment practices are in place.

Training and Evaluation

- We will ensure all our staff are trained and supported to protect children.
- We will ensure our staff who work directly with children are recruited, trained and supported to deliver safe services.

Operations

- We will ensure protecting children and young people is reflected in our change programmes and the strategic themes of NHS Grampian's Health Plan.

- We will constantly review our services in the light of published national policies.
- We will continue to adopt a multi-agency partnership approach to protecting children.
- We will strengthen links between all areas of mental health services and child protection services.

Continuous Improvement

- We will review all our services which directly protect children and take action where this is required.
- We will ensure a systematic process of self-evaluation is established.
- We will implement the health action plans flowing from the multi-agency inspection process.
- We will invest in child and adolescent mental health services to improve access to services for vulnerable children.

Reviews

- We will continue to be the lead partner carrying out inter-agency significant case reviews.
- We will engender a culture of continuous improvement and learning following significant incidents.

Communication

- We will promote the rights and needs of children across all our services.
- We will involve parents, carers and children in decisions which affect them.
- We will produce an Annual Report for sharing with our partners and the public.

Appendix I

Unified Management Group Child Health

CHAIR	GENERAL MANAGER CHILD HEALTH
	CLINICAL LEAD CHILD HEALTH
	SENIOR NURSE CHILD HEALTH
	SERVICE MANAGER CHILD HEALTH
	CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER
	GP SUB COMMITTEE
	CHILD HEALTH LEAD CITY
	CHILD HEALTH LEAD ABERDEENSHIRE
	CHILD HEALTH LEAD MORAY
	MENTAL HEALTH

Child Health Strategic Management Group

CHAIR	CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER
	CLINICAL LEAD CHILD HEALTH
	GENERAL MANAGER CHILD HEALTH
	PROFESSOR OF CHILD HEALTH
	CHAIR OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE
	GP SUB-COMMITTEE
	PUBLIC HEALTH LEAD
	MENTAL HEALTH SECTOR
	LEAD NURSE CHILD HEALTH
	SERVICE MANAGER CHILD HEALTH
	CHILD HEALTH LEAD CITY
	CHILD HEALTH LEAD SHIRE
	CHILD HEALTH LEAD MORAY
	ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL
	ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL
	MORAY COUNCIL

Protecting Children (Health) Group

CHAIR	EXECUTIVE LEAD CHILD PROTECTION
	DESIGNATED DOCTOR CHILD PROTECTION
	NURSE ADVISOR CHILD PROTECTION
	GENERAL MANAGER CHILD HEALTH
	FOSTERING & ADOPTION LEAD
	HEAD OF CLINICAL GOVERNANCE
	DENTAL ADVISOR
	ADULT PSYCHIATRY LINK DOCTOR
	GP ADVISOR
	LEAD COMMUNITY NURSE(3)
	CHILD HEALTH COMMISSIONER
	CLINICAL LEAD CHILD HEALTH
	PROFESSIONAL ADVISOR FOR MIDWIVES
	HEAD OF SERVICES NEONATES
	LEAD NURSE PAEDIATRICS
	LEAD NURSE G MED
	HEAD OF LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT
	HEAD OF ACUTE NURSING
	SERVICE MANAGER SUBSTANCE MISUSE
	HEAD OF FACILITIES

Appendix II

Organisational Chart

Service Organisation

NHS Grampian has operated as a single system since 2003. In terms of Child Health Services there are three Community Health Partnerships aligned to the three local authority areas. Each Community Health Partnership manages local primary and community services e.g. health visiting, school nursing.

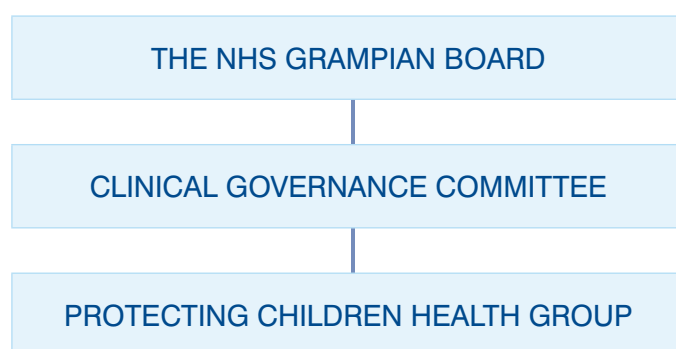
The Combined Child Health Service co-ordinates secondary care services under one management structure for Grampian. This includes community paediatrics as well as specialist child protection services.

The Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital is part of the Combined Child Health Services. It provides comprehensive medical and surgical services for the North of Scotland including Orkney and Shetland. Dr Gray's Hospital in Elgin has a 12 bed paediatric ward.

Child and adolescent mental health services are managed as a directorate within the mental health service for Grampian.

Most public health and health promotion services are managed within Community Health Partnerships with only a small element remaining as one central service within the corporate body.

The NHS Grampian Board through the Clinical Governance Committee takes overall responsibility for NHS services to protect children. The Protecting Children Health Group makes reports to the Clinical Governance Committee. The Executive Lead for Child Protection makes regular reports to The NHS Board.



Appendix III

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Scottish Government 2008.

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The Early Years Framework, Scottish Government
and COSLA 2008.

Useful Contacts

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www.nescpc.org.uk

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Aberdeenshire Council

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www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk

Moray Council

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www.moray.gov.uk

Childline

0800 1111
www.childline.org.uk

Parentline

0808 800 2222
www.children1st.org.uk

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