



Health Care Planning – Information Sheet

The Department of Communities (the Department) and the Department of Health have worked together to develop and implement health care planning so that children in the Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) of the Department's care have regular health checks and health plans.

A 'health plan' is a documented action plan, within a child's care plan, that aims to improve their physical and developmental outcomes.

What does health care planning involve?

Health care planning includes:

- When a child enters the CEO's care, they will have a general medical examination; a doctor will usually undertake this.
- A school age child will be enrolled in school dental services and receive treatment as required.
- Each child in the CEO's care will be referred for an age-appropriate health and developmental assessment as part of the care plan development and annual review process.
- If the child is four years of age or older, the caseworker will arrange for a behavioural and mental health assessment using a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) once they have settled in their care arrangement; this will then be arranged on an annual basis. You may be asked to complete the SDQ for the child in your care. If the child is 11 years or older, they may be able to complete the SDQ. The child's teacher may also be asked to complete the SDQ.
- Each child in the CEO's care should receive a Child Health Passport.

Why do children in the CEO's care need to have these assessments?

The reason for the initial medical examination and annual health and developmental assessment is to identify any problems early on so they don't have a major impact later on in the child's life. For example, if a hearing problem isn't identified and treated, the child may develop difficulties with speech or experience learning problems at school.

Who will see the child for a health and development assessment?

A child health nurse will usually see a child under school-age at a child health centre. A school health nurse may see a child of school-age while they are at school, or it might be more appropriate for a child to see their doctor. In remote communities, a remote area nurse at the community clinic will undertake the assessment, while Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) nursing staff will assess a child who normally attends an AMS clinic.



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The caseworker will talk with you and the child (if age permits) before making a referral, to work out the most appropriate health professional to undertake the assessment.

Information from the assessment is provided to the child's caseworker to help inform the health plan, which is discussed at the care plan meeting.

Will children under school age receive dental checks?

The health and developmental assessment for children under school age includes a general oral health check. The child health nurse will advise the child's caseworker if there are any oral health concerns noted.

If the child health nurse identifies concerns, the caseworker will make an appointment for the child at the local public dental clinic for a dental examination and any treatment that may be required. If you are taking the child to the appointment, the caseworker will provide you with a completed dental application and medical history form. This will provide the dentist with information and consent.

What is a Child Health Passport?

Every child in the CEO's care will have a Child Health Passport (the Passport). This is the personal health record for the child. It contains the child's details such as Medicare number, health history, health professionals' contact details and appointments, medications and immunisation records.

The Passport will provide you with information that may assist in meeting the child's day-to-day health needs, including a place to note any scheduled appointments. It will also provide health professionals with important information they may need when seeing the child, such as their immunisation history. If you are taking the child to an appointment, you should take the Passport along.

Where can I find out more about health care planning?

If you require more information on health care planning, or are unsure about any of the processes, contact the child's caseworker.

Information is also available in the Department's Casework Practice Manual. You can access the manual on the Department's Child Protection and Family Support division website at www.childprotection.wa.gov.au.

Contact information

Department of Communities

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