

CHILD & FAMILY WISHES:

Discussion Record

INFORMATION for FAMILIES

What is a 'Child & Family Wishes' discussion record?

A 'Child & Family Wishes' discussion record is to record your preferences for the care you would like your child* to receive if, or when, their condition deteriorates and they become seriously unwell. It can be difficult to make decisions during a crisis. The benefit of a 'Child & Family Wishes' discussion record is that it offers you the opportunity to think about, discuss and record your preferences for your child's care, before the situation occurs.

What does the making a plan involve?

The first step is to consider whether the time is right for you to have a conversation about the options available, and your preferences, for the care you would wish your child to receive in the event of them becoming seriously unwell. We understand that there is never a 'good' time to do this. Some parents are ready to make an advance plan after their child has had a health 'scare', such as an episode of serious illness. This can prompt them to consider what they would do if it were to happen again.

When you are ready to have a conversation, your child's health care team will answer your queries and concerns as realistically and sensitively as possible. You may also want to talk through the issues with friends or family, or your religious or spiritual advisor. You may want to have any of these people with you when you next talk to your child's health care team.

You may have very clear thoughts about some aspects of care, whereas other aspects may be less clear to you. A member of your child's health care team can show you a 'Wishes' plan and discuss the various options that might be suitable for your child. We will work together with you, at your pace, to put together a plan for your child.

How does it work?

Everyone who plays an important role in the life and health care of your child and, if appropriate, your child themselves, can be involved in the advance planning. The plan covers a range of different circumstances, including gradual deterioration in your child's health as well as sudden emergencies, and presents various care options available. These include the level and amount of medical and technical support, and the place where you would prefer your child to be cared for, such as at home, in a hospice or in hospital. Through discussion, these options can be tailored to the specific to the needs of your individual child and family.

*** for 'child' please read baby, child or young person**

A key feature of a Child & Family Wishes discussion record is that it is shared with all professionals involved in the care of your child, as well as those who might be called in an emergency. This means that everyone has clear information about the preferences and needs of your child and your family.

What happens when the plan has been made?

Once a Child & Family Wishes discussion record has been made, you and your health care professional will sign it to confirm the conversation you have had. Copies of the plan will be given to you and to each of the health care professionals who are routinely involved in your child's care, as well as those who might be contacted in an emergency, such as the Accident & Emergency department and the ambulance service.

What if I want to change any aspect of the 'Child & Family Wishes' discussion record once it has been made?

Child & Family Wishes discussion records are reviewed and updated regularly, with you, to ensure that the plan of care is still appropriate and that everyone understands what your preferences are. The team caring for your child will discuss and agree with you how often the plan should be reviewed.

You may find that you change your mind about the plans you have made. This is fine, and if it happens, tell one of your child's care team so the plan document can be updated. If you want your plan to be updated, you **do not have to wait** for the next review date.

Remember, you can make changes **at any time**, including during an acute situation.

What shall I do with my copy of the 'Child & Family Wishes' discussion record?

Keep your copy of the 'Wishes' discussion record in a safe place, perhaps with your child's other health records. It will be helpful if you can bring a copy with you when you come to the hospital or visit other health care settings.

For more information about the 'Child & Family Wishes' discussion record, please contact:

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