



Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding children Partnership

Child protection medical examination opinions

This document has been created by the Named Drs in your trust in conjunction with the Designated Dr for Safeguarding children for Derby and Derbyshire ICB.

The purpose of this document is to help Paediatricians formulate clear opinion and explanations of their opinion when writing Child Protection Medical reports. It is also there to help social care colleagues understand our opinions.

This document is guidance only and the clinician writing the report is ultimately responsible for the wording and opinion in their report. The opinions and explanations below are brief, and it would be expected that they are expanded upon in individual reports.

Opinion	Definition
Single injury "This is an inflicted injury (same as physical abuse / non-accidental injury)"	This means that the carer would have expected injuries be sustained by their actions and handling of the child (eg shaking / hitting with an implement / grabbing with force). These actions would be outside the expected normal care and handling of a child.
Multiple injuries "These are inflicted injuries (same as physical abuse / non-accidental injuries)"	This certainty of this opinion implies beyond reasonable doubt. This opinion would be expected to trigger/continue a section 47 investigation and safety planning for the child during the single assessment.

<p>Single injury "This injury is more likely an inflicted injury than an accidental injury. (An inflicted injury is the same as physical abuse / non-accidental injury)"</p> <p>Multiple injuries "Some of the injuries seen are more likely inflicted injuries than accidental injuries. (An inflicted injury is the same as physical abuse / non-accidental injury)"</p>	<p>This means that the injuries sustained have features of excessive force during care and handling. The carer may or may not have realised that the force used during handling would result in injury, however the injury would not have happened during expected standards of care.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>As no other explanation has been given and the pattern of injury is not commonly found in accidental injury, inflicted injury is more likely.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The events described by the child leading to the injury are suggestive of physical abuse. The injury itself is non-specific, but could have been caused by the events described and therefore inflicted injury is more likely.</p> <p>This certainty of this opinion implies on the balance of probabilities more likely an inflicted injury. (ie more than 50% probable, which means that an accidental injury is still up to 49% probable.</p> <p>This opinion would be expected to trigger/continue a section 47 investigation and safety planning for the child during the single assessment.</p>
<p>Single injury "This his injury is more likely an accidental injury than an inflicted injury. However standard supervision/care of the child would have prevented this injury suggesting an element of neglect or recklessness in supervision/care at the time of the</p>	<p>This means that the injuries sustained have features likely to have occurred in normal activities in mobile children or during an accident occurring during a care event. However, the circumstances of injury and/or the number of injuries suggest a lack of supervision. This may reflect there is poor general care of the child or there is good general care but an unfortunate incident (eg. scald from hot liquid, unsupervised pet injury, multiple accidental injuries).</p>

<p>injury. (An inflicted injury is the same as physical abuse / non-accidental injury)"</p> <p>Multiple injuries "These injuries are more likely accidental injuries than an inflicted injuries. However standard supervision/care of the child would have prevented these injuries suggesting an element of neglect or recklessness in supervision/care at the time of the injury. (An inflicted injury is the same as physical abuse / non-accidental injury)"</p>	<p>The certainty of this opinion implies on the balance of probabilities more likely an accidental injury, (ie more than 50% probable, which means that an inflicted injury is up to 49% probably. However, there may also be an unknown element of neglect.</p> <p>This opinion would indicate a need to better understand the quality of care and supervision in the home and would be expected to trigger / continue a single assessment and depending on other factors trigger / continue a section 47 investigation.</p>
<p>Single injury "This injury is more likely an accidental injury than an inflicted injury . (An inflicted injury is the same as physical abuse / non-accidental injury)"</p> <p>Multiple injuries "These injuries are more likely accidental injuries than inflicted injuries . (An inflicted injury is the same as physical abuse / non-accidental injury)"</p>	<p>This means that the injuries sustained have features likely to have occurred in normal activities in mobile children or during an accident occurring during a care event (eg. a fall from a carer's arms).</p> <p>This certainty of this opinion implies on the balance of probabilities more likely an accidental injury (ie more than 50% probable, which means that an inflicted injury is up to 49% probably.</p> <p>This opinion would not in itself trigger/continue a section 47 investigation, but there may be other factors in the case to cause ongoing concerns.</p>
<p>Unexplained isolated bruise in a non-mobile infant and therefore inflicted</p>	<p>0.1-3% of non-rolling infants have bruising which may be caused without parent's knowledge. Up to 17% infants who are crawling have been found to have bruising.</p>

<p>injury cannot be excluded (An inflicted injury is the same as physical abuse / non-accidental injury)"</p>	<p>Accidental bruising in pre-mobile infants is therefore uncommon.</p> <p>If an isolated bruise is found, with no other injuries identified, or medical explanations for easy bruising, the injury is unexplained. It may have been caused by handling during care without the carer realising a bruise could be caused. However an isolated bruise may be the first inflicted injury by a carer , potentially leading to future inflicted injuries which may lead to serious harm in a vulnerable infant.</p> <p>This opinion would indicate a need to better understand the quality of care and supervision in the home and would be expected to trigger / continue a single assessment and depending on other factors trigger/continue a section 47 investigation.</p>
<p>"This injury / these injuries is / are accidental"</p>	<p>This means that the injuries sustained have occurred during normal activities in mobile children or during an accident occurring during a care event with a clear explanation and appropriate response.</p> <p>This certainty of this opinion implies beyond reasonable doubt these are accidental injuries.</p> <p>This opinion would not in itself trigger/continue a section 47 investigation, but there may be other factors in the case to cause ongoing concerns.</p>
<p>" There is no identified injury but there remain concerns that this event placed the child at risk of harm"</p>	<p>There has been no identified injury found. However, the information about the events leading to the examination is concerning. The events suggest that poor care and handling or supervision put the child at risk of harm which could have been predicted by the carer(s) (eg domestic abuse whilst child in carers arms).</p> <p>This opinion may trigger/continue a section 47 investigation depending on the information on individual case.</p>

"There is no identified injury"	<p>There has been no identified injury found. The information about the events leading to the examination does not suggest that the child was put at risk of harm.</p> <p>This opinion on its own would not trigger/continue a section 47 investigation, but there may be other factors in the case to cause ongoing concerns.</p>
"A medical explanation accounts for the examination findings"	<p>A medical explanation such as a birth mark or a clotting problem can explain the findings on the examination. There are no features to suggest physical abuse.</p> <p>This opinion on its own would not trigger/continue a section 47 investigation, but there may be other factors in the case to cause ongoing concerns.</p>
Injury / injuries unexplained and unable to determine if accidental or non-accidental (not to be used in non-mobile infants)	<p>There is no (or consistent) explanation for the injury. The injury itself does not have features suggestive of inflicted injury. However inflicted injury can not be ruled out.</p> <p>This opinion on its own would not trigger/continue a section 47 investigation, but there may be other factors in the case to cause ongoing concerns.</p>

Version Control

This document replaces all other previous published versions and should be read in conjunction with the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Procedures					
Ver	Author/s	Updated by	Signed off by	Date	Review Date
1.	Consultant Paediatrician and Designated Doctor for Derby City	-	DDSCP Policy and Procedures Group	July 2023	July 2025