**West Sussex – Practice Guidance**

IROs are qualified social workers with at least five years’ experience, and who have acquired the right skills to carry out this role.

**Health Notifications and Access to Services**

* When a child first moves to a children’s home, the social worker must arrange for the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), in the area where a child is placed, to be notified of the placement.
* The Registered Manager of the home should allocate a Key Worker to the child who will act as the main contact with all health professionals.
* The Key Worker will also be responsible for ensuring that up to date information is kept in relation to the child’s health needs, development, illnesses, operations, immunisations, allergies, medications administered, dates of appointments with GP's and specialists
* The Key Worker will also be responsible for completing the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire *(see Practice Guidance on ‘Health Care Assessments and Plans’ for more information).*
* The Registered Manager must arrange the following:
* Child to be registered with a GP;
* child to have access to a Dentist in the home's locality;
* child to be registered with an Optician in the home's locality;
* For a Health Assessment to be carried out in relation to the child, as set out in the Practice Guidance ‘Health Care Assessments and Plans’
* Details of these registrations (and any changes) must be recorded on the Child’s file.

**Access to Health and Specialist Service**

* The Registered Manager must ensure the home has good links with health agencies, is well informed about local health services such as CAMHS and Sexual Health Services in the area it covers, and takes this into account when deciding on admissions.
* Staff must have sufficient understanding of health services including the function of the Designated Nurse for Looked After Children. The home should liaise with the child’s social worker to enable proper and immediate access to any specialist medical, psychological or psychiatric support. Staff in the home must challenge if these services are not provided for a child in their care.
* If a child has specialist health care needs, the Registered Manager must work in partnership with the child’s social worker and relevant healthcare professionals to ensure this is in place.
* If there are any serious concerns about the emotional or mental health of a child, the Registered Manager must alert the social worker, and seek a review of the child's placement and/or request an assessment.
* Any strategies/services that are provided must be outlined in the child's individual Support Plan and Health Plan.

**Appointments**

* If children need or ask for an appointment, these must be made on their behalf with their GP or other medical practitioners as appropriate.
* When appointments are made, account must be taken of the child's wishes, for example, to see a practitioner of a preferred gender. Also, appointments should preferably be made which do not disrupt the child's education.
* Parents, those with Parental Responsibility and the child's social worker should, if possible, be consulted before making appointments; and they should be informed of the outcome.
* The Key worker must make a record of all medical appointments and log any decisions or actions taken at the appointment on the child’s file.
* As appropriate, the Chronology/and child’s record must be updated to take account of any appointments.

**Links to related documents:**

Health Care Assessments and Plans

Outcome of Medical Appointment form