

Good Practice Guide – Medical treatment and examination

In some cases of abuse (e.g. physical or sexual) it may be unclear whether injuries have been caused by abuse or some other means (e.g. accidentally). Medical or specialist advice should be sought immediately.

- If medical treatment is needed, an immediate referral should be made to the person's GP, A&E or a relevant specialist health team.
- If forensic evidence needs to be collected, the Police should always be contacted. They will normally arrange for a police surgeon (forensic medical examiner) to be involved.
- Consent of the adult should be sought. Where the person does not have capacity to consent to a medical examination, a decision should be made on the basis of whether it is in the person's best interests for a possibly intrusive medical examination to be conducted.
- Should it be necessary to arrange for a medical examination, the following points should be considered:
 - the rights of the adult
 - issues of consent and ability to consent
 - the need to preserve forensic evidence
 - the involvement of any family members or carers
 - who should accompany the adult and provide support & reassurance.