

Cardiff & Vale

UHB

**PLAY POLICY FRAMEWORK
DOCUMENT**

INTRODUCTION

This document will cover the following:

- **Mission Statement**
- **Policy Statement**
- **Aim of policy**
- **Objectives of policy**
- **Body of policy**
- **Responsibilities**
- **Resources**
- **Training**
- **Implementation**
- **Clinical Policies**
- **Further Information**
- **Audit**

MISSION STATEMENT

Play is essential to the growth and development of children. It fulfils a number of functions and needs of children from birth through to adolescence.

Cardiff & Vale NHS Trust recognise the need to provide play for children of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

PLAY is a generic term applied to a wide range of activities and behaviours that are satisfying to the child, creative for the child and freely chosen by the child. It enables a child to develop positive attitudes to differences of ethnicity, religion, culture, language, gender and ability.

To provide this service the Trust employs a Play Team. The staff are appropriately trained and the service will offer hospital play, distraction, preparation, therapeutic play and normal play throughout the Trust wherever possible, at the discretion of the Play Staff, following their professional assessment of the child.

POLICY STATEMENT

Cardiff and Vale UHB recognises that hospitals accepting children should employ appropriately qualified Play professionals to facilitate play for children of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds.

Children have a basic need for play which is best met by a member of the Play Department. Wherever possible the Department aim to provide this service. The rôle of the play department includes:

- General play
- Preparational play
- Distraction for invasive procedures
- Post-procedural play
- Individual referrals
- Therapeutic play

- Using play as an observational medium
- A method of communication
- Acting as the child's advocate at all times
- Providing a quality teaching programme for teaching students and members of the MDT.
- The Play Department are available to advise all other areas in The Trust, where children are seen, on the appropriateness of their toys. This will hopefully offer all children the opportunity to play. The cleanliness and safety of this equipment would be the responsibility of each department.

AIMS

Children should have access to an environment that facilitates and encourages play.

We aim to ensure equity of service provided by the Play Staff.

We aim to provide a quality service to universally high professional standards, keeping up to date with current good practice by membership of a professional body and attending appropriate training and study days.

The Department aim to provide a safe and stimulating quality environment that provides play that is sensitive for both for the individual and for groups of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.

- To provide a normal reassuring experience, and increase each child's ability to regain confidence, independence and self-esteem.
- To promote normal child development, and help children regain skills lost through regression and the effects of illness and hospitalisation.
- To aid diagnosis, and help the child understand illness and treatment and the ability to participate in decision making.
- To encourage families to be involved in the child's care and play, and to relieve anxiety and anger by providing a creative outlet.
- To encourage and enable other members of staff to be involved in the child's play.
- To ensure that the play environment is safe, stimulating and well-maintained.
- To promote the value of play in hospital through training and education.

- Play staff will aim to provide an interesting and appropriate learning experience for students including, HPS, NNEB/BTEC, nurses etc. Placements should be organised through the Play Services Manager or Senior HPS.
- ***TO HAVE FUN!!***

OBJECTIVES

Hospitals that accept children should employ appropriately qualified play professionals to facilitate play for children of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds.

Children have a basic need for play which is best met by a member of the Play Department.

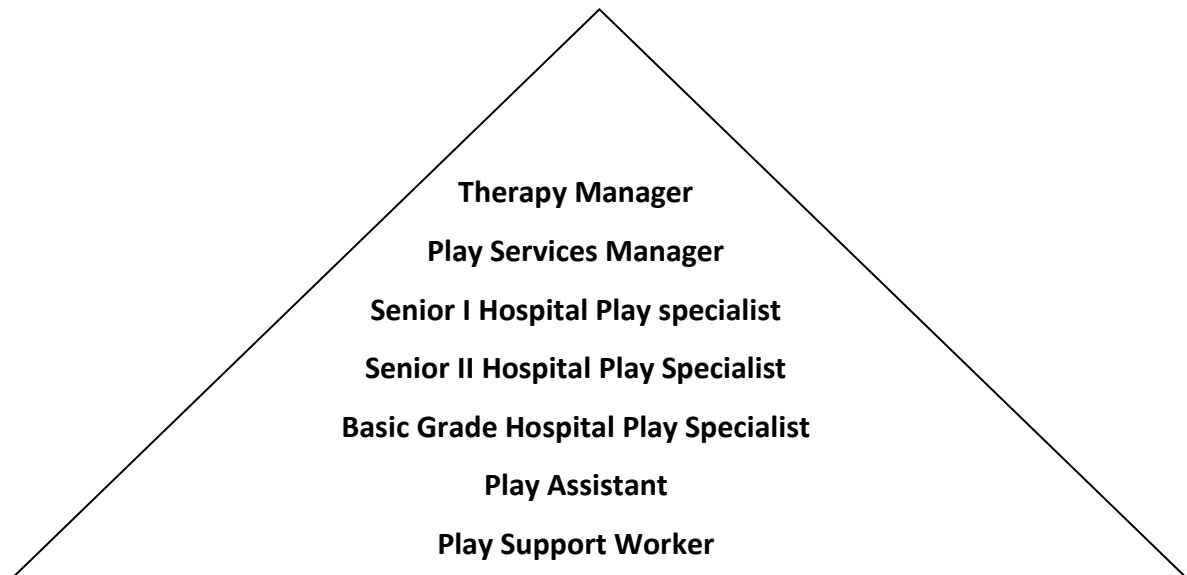
Wherever possible the Department aim to provide this service. The benefits of play in hospital are well documented and include:

- It bridges the gap between home and hospital
- Helps the child to cope with illness
- Helps the child to cope with painful procedures
- Facilitates the relationship between the child and the MDT
- Minimises trauma
- Allows child to express emotions, anger and fear
- Can aid diagnosis
- Speeds recovery and rehabilitation
- Develops language and communication
- May help a withdrawn child to become more self-assured and confident.
- Develops new skills
- Re-assures the child that their body still works
- Empowers and helps child to regain control
- Helps child to relax
- Relieves boredom
- Allows child to work through; strange experiences; strange surroundings; separation; anxieties; pain and discomfort
- Increases creativity and independence
- Helps work through regression by providing play which is familiar rather than challenging
- ***BUT MOST OF ALL, PLAY IS FUN!***

BODY OF POLICY

Hospitals that accept children should provide adequate levels of play support.

The Play Department is comprised of a team of qualified staff. They are directly responsible to the Play Services Manager.



Staff to patient ratio should be at the discretion of the Play Staff after assessing the specific needs of the children in their care. The Play Specialist should retain the right to refuse supervision of patients if safety is compromised, and prioritise her work load accordingly.

Action for Sick Children state that *'In hospital Play is especially important. Hospitalisation can be very frightening; children are confronted with confusing routines, unfamiliar surroundings and strange faces, as well as being apparently persecuted by adults who inflict pain and discomfort on them. Very young children most fear separation from their parents and older children are likely to fear bodily mutilation or even death. Play provides an essential means of helping cope with all these difficulties.'* (Value of play in hospital, Pauline Shelley) Oct 1991.

It goes on to say...

- *'Play can help a child prepare for procedures and surgery'*
- *'Play helps children cope with their feelings of anger or fear'.*
- *'Play is an excellent way of teaching children facts and correcting their distortions of reality'.*

The AWCH Charter for children in hospital states that, *'Children shall have full opportunity for play, recreation and education suited to their age and condition'* (AWCH Charter for Children in Hospital, Association for the Welfare of Children in Hospital)

An article in Paediatric Nursing entitled 'The facilitating role of the Play Specialist' states that ... *'Play becomes an important child –centred communication tool. It can be used to build up support strategies and understanding between children and adults caring for them'*.

It then continues to add... *'Many of the feelings that hospitalised children have can be supported through appropriate intervention by the Play Specialist who is trained to understand the specific affects of hospitalisation and illness on the changing developmental needs of children'*. (Paediatric Nursing, Vol 12, no7)2000

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Child Health Directorate is responsible for implementing the Play Policy. The Play Department's responsibility is to carry out the procedures within this policy. Each member of the Play Department is responsible for ensuring the aims and objectives are met wherever possible.

RESOURCES

- The Play Team will regularly monitor toys and equipment and ensure they are well maintained, disposing of anything inappropriate, broken or damaged as soon as they become aware.
- The Play Staff will be responsible for ensuring toys and equipment in their areas are safe and appropriate to the age of the children using that area wherever possible.
- Toys and equipment should be regularly cleaned. Toys used in barrier rooms will be cleaned following the Trust Infection Control Policy.
- Equipment needs to be of a high standard to ensure a quality service can be provided. Equipment needs to be replaced regularly, subject to adequate funding from the Trust.
- The Play Staff should make the nursing staff aware of the Health and Safety recommendations for the play areas/equipment in their absence.
- The Play Services Manager will be responsible for the staff's attendance of mandatory study days. Study time will be made available; funding will be available wherever possible.

TRAINING

All members of staff must have the relevant childcare qualification and training. The funding and study time will be made available for all new members of staff, following 1-2 years experience in their areas, to attend the HPS course whenever available.

Each of the Play Specialists is responsible for their own continuous professional development and for re-registration within the relevant professional body every year and to be audited every three years.

New members of staff would regularly be given a one to one with either the Play Services Manager, or a senior HPS. They would also be assigned a mentor for as long as it was required.

All members of the Play Team will be given an annual appraisal in line with KSF. During each appraisal every member of the Play Team will be given the opportunity to raise any training issues that may arise.

IMPLEMENTATION

The policy will be implemented by the Play Team under guidance of the play Services Manager and senior play specialists.

All members of the Trust should be aware of the Play Policy, and their rôles within it.

All appropriately trained and experienced members of staff who come into contact with children throughout Cardiff & Vale UHB Trust can follow and implement this policy.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information that may be of use as a resource,

NAHPS

www.nahps.org.uk

Administration & Membership

Sue Pallot,

143 Gresham Road

Staines

Middlesex, TW18 2AG

AWCH

131 Penyrheol Drive

Sketty

Swansea, SA2 9JT

ASC

www.actionforsickchildren.org

Helpline 0800 0744519

NNEB

(Refer to local college)

HPS ET

PO Box 30

Bramhall

Stockport

SK7 1FR

Tel/fax 0161 4395800

CLINICAL POLICIES

All members of the Play Team should be aware of the relevant Health/Safety/Risk Policy for their areas, and follow the Trust guidelines.

Play staff are not responsible for children left unattended in play areas.

Play staff are not responsible for siblings except in exceptional circumstances after discussion and assessment of need by play staff.

AUDIT

In order to ensure compliance documentation will be produced daily in accordance with this policy and be available on request, this will be carried out wherever members of the Play Department are located. Play staff will be responsible for monitoring the service in their area.

Questionnaires and other resources will be standardised and used periodically to evaluate and audit the service provided. This will help to identify any shortfalls and amend accordingly in order to ensure best practice is met.

Sue Reardon / Play Department Cardiff & Vale UHB