

Ref. No: FOI2419
Date: 10/03/2026
Subject: Neonatal abstinence

REQUEST

1. Please could I request detail of any services you run for children born exposed to drugs/ alcohol (NAS) and FASD).
2. Specifically, your treatment guidelines / policy document for neonatal abstinence syndrome.
3. Post discharge follow up arrangements for babies with neonatal abstinence (eg paediatric / OT / Physio / any dedicated specialised clinics).
4. Long term follow up pathway for children who suffered neonatal abstinence.
5. Foetal alcohol (FASD) diagnostic pathway and follow up arrangements

RESPONSE

1. For NAS, as an acute Trust, we assess all mothers with a history of drug/alcohol use during pregnancy, which is flagged by the Maternity team to the Paediatric/Neonatal team. After birth, the baby will be fully assessed using a specific scoring system (NAS Withdrawal Scoring System) and treated according to the scoring system.

For FASD, currently there is no service run at this Trust for long term support for management, although talks are ongoing with commissioners to develop an MDT service within our Developmental/Community Paediatric services, in line with NICE Guidance.

2. Neonatal Abstinence Guidelines are attached for both our Ormskirk and Whiston sites. We are currently in the process of harmonising these 2 guidelines to create a singular MWL

guideline (previously we were two separate Trusts; legacy Southport & Ormskirk and legacy St Helens & Knowsley hospitals). The Ormskirk guideline, described as MWL guideline has not yet been harmonised, but was updated in the new MWL template because it is only available at Ormskirk on their intranet. Each site has their own access to each guideline

Please see attached PDF's

- 3. For babies born with NAS, the child will be followed up in the General Paediatric clinic initially after 8 weeks, and then every few months depending on their symptoms and severity. If there are no long-standing developmental concerns, the baby will be discharged by the age of c.1 year, at the clinical discretion of the consultant paediatrician.**
- 4. If a child who suffered NAS requires long-term follow up, then they are referred on to our Developmental/Community Paediatric service for long-term follow up.**
- 5. This Trust does not currently have a FASD diagnostic pathway although does have a STHK legacy guideline for 'FASD Recognition & Management in the Neonate' which as per point 2 above, will be harmonised across sites to create a pan MWL guideline. In line with NICE guidance, which emphasises an MDT approach to management of FASD in the community, our Trust is liaising with local commissioners to develop an MDT service within our Developmental/Community Paediatrics services.**

Please see attached PDF