



CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINE

Guideline coverage includes NICU KEMH, NICU PCH and NETS WA

Pastoral Care Referral

This document should be read in conjunction with the [Disclaimer](#)

Scope

Staff in the NICU at King Edward Memorial Hospital (KEMH) and Perth Children's Hospital (PCH).

Purpose

To ensure that referral to Pastoral Care Services (PCS) will occur in appropriate and timely circumstances to ensure best practice for pastoral, religious, spiritual and emotional care of patients and families KEMH.

Background

Pastoral, religious, spiritual and emotional care are central components of holistic healthcare and support better health outcomes. To this end it is important that appropriate and timely referrals are made to PCS so that assessment and response by PCS staff can be facilitated and needs met.

Guidelines

Clinical staff in the NICU at KEMH and PCH are to ensure referrals to PCS occur in the following circumstances:

- All babies admitted to NICU at a gestation of 25 weeks or under;
- All babies with early prediction of poor outcomes;
- All baby deaths.

Note: Referral to Pastoral Care can be initiated for any reason and is not limited to the stated circumstances listed in this guideline.

- All urgent referral to PCS will be attended to as soon as practicable and on the same day.
- All non-urgent referrals to PCS will be attended to on the same day wherever possible.
- The PCS Chaplain will assess the family's response to what is occurring including significant religious or spiritual orientation or meanings that may be relevant or confronting them in the circumstance; their understanding of what is occurring and what responses or resources may be relevant.
- Following each initial assessment visit the PCS Chaplain will document in the medical record and AHS, determine what follow-up is required, complete clinical handover form (if required) and inform the relevant Social Worker of the visit and outcome.

Related WNHS policies, procedures and guidelines

Neonatal Clinical Guidelines – [End of Life Care: Palliative Care, Grief and Loss](#)
 - [End of Life Care: Baptism](#)
 Obstetrics and Gynaecology Guideline - [Perinatal Loss](#)

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