

TITLE OF REPORT: Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder update

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SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to give a summary and initial response to the recently published NICE quality standards for FASD (<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/QS204> published on 16/3/22). This is in the context of the previous work in Gateshead to review diagnoses of Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) and Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). The summary of this work was presented to the OSC in June 2021.

INTRODUCTION

The Quality Standard covers assessing and diagnosing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) in children and young people. It also covers support during pregnancy to prevent FASD. It describes high-quality care in priority areas for improvement.

It is based on the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN) guidance on FASD.

Quality standards help us to improve the quality of care we provide or commission and can help to:

1. Identify gaps and areas for improvement
2. Measure the quality of care
3. Understand how to improve care
4. Demonstrate we provide quality care
5. Commission high quality services

THE QUALITY STANDARDS

[Statement 1](#) Pregnant women are given advice throughout pregnancy not to drink alcohol.

[Statement 2](#) Pregnant women are asked about their alcohol use throughout their pregnancy and this is recorded.

[Statement 3](#) Children and young people with probable prenatal alcohol exposure and significant physical, developmental or behavioural difficulties are referred for assessment.

[Statement 4](#) Children and young people with confirmed prenatal alcohol exposure or all 3 facial features associated with prenatal alcohol exposure have a neurodevelopmental assessment if there are clinical concerns.

[Statement 5](#) Children and young people with a diagnosis of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) have a management plan to address their needs.

INITIAL RESPONSE AND ACTIONS

- Patient information leaflet regarding alcohol use in pregnancy and the associated risks is now uploaded into the electronic hand held records of pregnant women in Gateshead.
- Ongoing work to develop and agree questions regarding alcohol use in pregnancy to be used by midwives.
- There is no commissioned FASD service in Gateshead and there are limited resources to access the high quality, detailed assessments as recommended for a neurodevelopmental assessment in those with possible FASD.
- We continue to see children and young people with a range of physical, developmental or behavioural difficulties who are referred for assessment, including those with probable prenatal alcohol exposure. Assessment, investigation and referrals are undertaken as needed and diagnosis of FASD considered within the previously agreed regional guidance.

Dr Eleanor Dawson, Consultant Community Paediatrician and Designated Doctor for Looked After Children and Young People.

Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust

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