

Hook Surgery- policy for consent to treatment for children

Gillick Competency Test/Fraser Guidelines

In this practice treatment of children over the age of 16 years of age are regarded as adults for the purpose of medical treatment and consent to their own medical treatment. The Gillick Competency test and Fraser guidelines are applied to children who are under the age of 16 years. Whilst these guidelines refer to the prescription of contraception for sexually active young people they can be extrapolated to cover consent to treatment for under 16s.

The Fraser Guidelines:

1. The young person understands the advice being given.
2. The young person cannot be convinced to involve parents/carers or allow the medical practitioner to do so on their behalf.
3. It is likely that the young person will begin or continue having intercourse with or without treatment/contraception.
4. Unless he or she receives treatment/contraception their physical or mental health (or both) is likely to suffer.
5. The young person's best interests require contraceptive advice, treatment or supplies to be given without parental consent.

If a practitioner deems that a child is sufficiently mature to understand what is involved with any proposed treatment they use discretion as whether consent can be given by the child. The practitioner will encourage the child to involve his/her parents in their treatment. If the practitioner decides to inform the parents the child should be informed of this. The practitioner always acts in the best interest of the child.

Consent to Treat Children not Gillick Competent

Treatment of children can only be done with the consent of the mother (or father **ONLY IF HE WAS MARRIED TO THE MOTHER AT THE TIME OF THE BIRTH**). If someone other than this, or an unmarried father brings the child for treatment signed consent from the mother must be obtained before treatment is given. "For vaccinations this should be in the red book. The signature should relate to the correct vaccination. If this is not available then the child **MUST NOT** be vaccinated".

Alternatively a person who has parental responsibilities e.g. if child is in care may give consent.