

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**  
**on Immediate Post-Operative Observations of the Child/Infant**


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<b>Approved By</b> Name: <i>Fionnuala O' Neill</i> Title: <i>Nursing Practice Development Coordinator</i>	
<b>Authorised By</b> Name: <i>Karen Mc Guire</i> Title: <i>Director of Nursing</i>	
<b>Author/s</b>	Name: <i>Rosemary Clerkin</i> Title: <i>Clinical Placement Coordinator</i>
<b>Location of Copies</b>	<i>On Hospital Intranet and locally in department</i>

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## 1.0 Introduction

This SOP is a guidance document on post-operative observations and must be used in conjunction with the operating surgeons orders.

## 2.0 Definition of Standard Operating Procedure

The term '**Standard Operating Procedure**' is a way of carrying out a particular course of action and includes operations, investigations, pharmaceutical treatment, examinations and any other treatment carried out

## 3.0 Applicable to

This document applies to all registered nursing staff caring for the child post-surgery.

## 4.0 Objectives of Standard Operating Procedure

The objective of this SOP is to give guidance on the observations to be performed on a child post-surgery.

## 5.0 Definitions / Terms

### PEWS – Paediatric Early Warning Score

## 6.0 Procedures


Ensure all equipment used to perform observations are in working order and are serviced as required by the clinical engineering department (HSE 2010)

Wash your hands prior to caring for the child RCPI /HSE 2015) Introduce yourself explaining the observations you intend to carry out. Engage with the younger child involving play to assist with the observations to reduce anxiety and build a rapport.

Vital signs regime - this schedule will start in the Recovery Room

- ¼ hourly for 2 hours
  - ½ hourly for 2 hours
  - 1 hourly for 2 hours
  - 4 hourly when stable
- 
- This is a guideline. Observations must be performed as condition indicates and as per surgeons' instructions on post-operative sheet

Name of Department

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- Place child on oxygen saturation monitor if respiratory system is compromised
- Please do not read heart rate from monitor, use stethoscope for infants and palpitate pulse for children
- Children cared for on a morphine infusion will have hourly respirations and if younger than 12 months will have continuous O2Sa monitoring or apnoea monitoring
- Children nursed on an epidural will require observations as per Epidural guideline OLCCH (2008)
- Children with postoperative circumferential dressings and or surgical nerve interventions will require neurovascular observations as per guideline.
- Document observations clearly and promptly NMBI (2015)
- Report if concerned or as per PEWS guidance CHI (2020)

## 7.0 Implementation Plan

All registered nurses will have access to this document and will be included as part of the ward orientation on wards caring for children post-surgical

## 8.0 Evaluation and Audit

Monitoring of compliance is an important aspect of procedural documents. This will be audited through the HSE metric audit on each ward.

## 9.0 References


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