

Improving our preoperative care for children with neurodisability

Feedback following our survey of the Sheffield Parent and Carer Forum in 2019.

You said

We did

We could do more to prepare for your child's needs in advance



We now have a preoperative planning service for children with additional needs. We aim to contact you in advance and arrange any reasonable adjustments required – like a quiet waiting area, being first on the operating list and appropriate premedication.

We don't understand enough about autism and learning disability



We now have a Lead Nurse for Learning Disability and are working towards every area in the Trust having a Learning Disability Ambassador to promote staff education and good practice.

We need to communicate better between departments and be consistent in our care



We have developed a patient-held communication passport, which will help everyone caring for your child to understand their needs. We also have an alert system in our electronic notes for important information.

We need to manage postoperative pain better for children who cannot communicate well



We have introduced a comprehensive assessment tool called the Paediatric Pain Profile, which will help us to improve pain relief for non-verbal children having inpatient surgery.

We need to provide information resources in suitable formats for children coming for surgery



We have a comprehensive range of resources on our hospital website, including a symbol-assisted social story, a short video narrated in Makaton and an easy-read picture book. We can also provide individual photo journeys as part of our preoperative preparation service.

We need to be more individual and flexible in our approach



We hope to identify children with neurodisability well before the day of surgery, so an anaesthetist or play specialist can be in touch to plan and prepare for admission on an individual basis. There are many adjustments we can make to usual routines to improve the child's experience.

We need to provide better supervision and specialist equipment



With advance notice of your child's needs, we can now arrange equipment and staffing appropriately for their stay in hospital.

we care

