

# Children & Young People's Inpatient Wards in acute hospitals

## Safer Nursing Care Tool (SNCT)

The National Quality Board has set the expectation that to ensure safe, effective, caring, responsive and well-led care on a sustainable basis, trusts will employ the right staff with the right skills in the right place and at the right time. NHS provider boards hold individual and collective responsibility for making judgements about staffing and the delivery of safe, effective, compassionate and responsive care within available resources (NQB 2016).

The Children & Young People's Safer Nursing Care Tool (SNCT) is an adaptation of the original Safer Nursing Care Tool for adult inpatient wards developed in 2006 and updated in 2013. It has been developed to help NHS hospitals make evidence based decisions on staffing in children and young people's inpatient wards in line with the National Quality Board's expectations using patient acuity and dependency to inform these decisions.

The tool, when allied to Nurse Sensitive Indicators (NSIs), will also offer nurses a reliable method against which to deliver evidence based workforce plans to support existing services or the development of new services. The Children and Young People's (C&YP) wards included in the development of the tool cared for children aged 0-19 years across many specialties in university and specialist children's hospitals. It is therefore suitable for determining nurse staffing establishments for all C&YP inpatient wards.

### Ensuring safe, sustainable and productive staffing

The Children & Young People's Safer Nursing Care Tool is:

- ◆ Suitable for determining nurse staffing establishments for all C&YP inpatient wards
- ◆ Used in conjunction with Nurse Sensitive Indicators (NSIs), patient and staff outcomes that can be linked to nurse staffing such as patient falls and pressure ulcer incidence
- ◆ Able to support benchmarking activity in organisations when used across trusts. This will guide consistent decision making in setting safe and sustainable nurse establishments in line with agreed standards across similar care settings in England.

#### Benefits of the Safer Nursing Care Tool

**Embraces all the principles that should be considered when evaluating/implementing decision support tools described in 'Safe, sustainable and productive staffing - An improvement resource for Children and Young People's inpatient wards in acute hospitals (NHSI 2017)**

**Measurement** of acuity and/or dependency

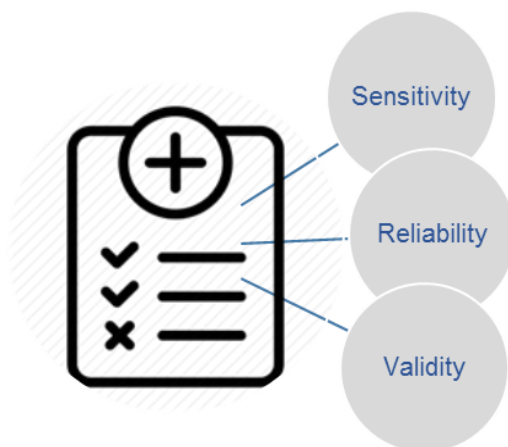
**Accurate** data collection methodology

**Nurse Sensitive Indicators** - organisation-level metrics to monitor the impact of staffing levels on the quality of patient care and outcomes, the use of resources and on staff themselves (NHSI 2017) allied to acuity and/or dependency measurement

**Nursing multipliers** to support professional judgement.

## The development process

The tool was developed, validated and reviewed by NHS experts in children and young people's services. The decision matrix for assessing acuity and dependency takes account of the levels of care described by the Paediatric Intensive Care Society with additional details to enable consistent identification of these provided by the senior children's nursing teams in the participating trusts.



## Data collection exercise

The tool was developed and validated by NHS experts. This included recalibrating the tool using the UK Nursing Database, which included 101 acute children's best practice wards (those achieving a pre-determined quality rating) and 40,602 episodes of care meeting 31,950 quality standards. This was important to ensure the staffing recommendations derived were not perpetuating poor practice standards. The database also included 163,821 ward staff activities/interventions

Additionally all staff activity was recorded, time out eg meal breaks were measured, as well as bed occupancy recorded, so that a patient turnover factor was included. As a result the nursing resource (multiplier) aligned to each level of care takes account of all of these.

## Future developments

The SNCT team are currently adapting the nursing multiplier (resource) to provide an accurate method to identify care hours per patient day (CHPPD) - the new metric used to enable benchmarking with peers in the Model Hospital dashboard (NHSI,2016). This will provide CHPPD based on the actual patient acuity and dependency of the patient group cared for in the individual wards supporting safe sustainable productive nurse staffing.

## The opportunity

To license the Children and Young People's inpatient ward Safer Nursing Care Tool.

**The Tool was formally approved by The Shelford Chief Nurses and supported by NHS England and the Association of Children's Chief Nurses (ACCN) in 2016.**

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