



Ref: 0693

**Request:**

Received: 18/05/2010

Does NHS have a policy or procedure about how paramedics deal with children or vulnerable adults who are under the care of a patient at the time of treatment and transport? (I'm not talking abused children, just children who happen to be in the flat at the time the paramedics arrive). Is there procedures about leaving the kids with someone, or taking them to hospital?

**Response:**

Responded: 19/05/2010

Dear

Thank you for your request for information, placed under the Freedom of Information Act (2000) (FOIA).

I cannot comment in relation to the NHS as a whole, but please see attachment in relation to our Trust's policy guidance on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Gary Bassett

Head of Patient Experiences  
London Ambulance Service NHS Trust



**Attachment:**

**Extract from OP/015 - Procedure for the Conveyance of Patients:**

2.12 Where possible, patients below the age of 16 should be accompanied by a parent or guardian. When this is not possible, either a teacher or other responsible adult can accompany the patient in loco parentis, or, the attendant will act in loco parentis until this responsibility is passed to the person receiving the patient. There is no minimum age at which a child /children maybe left unsupervised. However, ambulance staff must convey the child /children or contact EOC/ UOC to arrange for the police to attend and assume responsibility. (See Procedure for Actions on Scene Indirectly Related to the Patient - Safeguarding of Children).

**Extract from OP/017 - Procedure on Actions INDIRECTLY Relating to the Patient:**

**8.0 Safeguarding of Children**

8.1 If the removal of a patient to hospital will result in a child being left unsupervised, ambulance staff must either convey the child/children or contact EOC to arrange for the police to attend and assume responsibility. This action should not delay the patient's conveyance to hospital. If the patient's condition is serious and children are to be left alone, then the urgency for the police attendance must be indicated.

8.2 There is no minimum age at which a child may be left unsupervised. Legally, no offence is committed until the child comes to harm, at which point the responsible adult can be prosecuted for failing to ensure their safety. As a guide, a person is considered a child in this context until the age of eighteen. If a child is under fifteen years, staff should make arrangements as in 8.1,

Children between fifteen and eighteen years may be temporarily left alone if staff are confident of the child's ability to care for themselves. If in doubt staff may make arrangements as in 8.1. If the child is left at home the receiving A&E nurse/doctor must be notified at hand over and the occurrence documented on the PRF.