

Safe Infant Sleeping Policy

1. Purpose

Safe infant sleeping practices and messages are used across the WA health system to reduce the risk and incidence of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI). The Safe Infant Sleeping Policy promotes best safe infant sleeping practices by mandating training for staff about safe infant sleeping practices and promoting key messages regarding safe infant sleeping.

This policy is a mandatory requirement for Health Service Providers under the *Clinical Services Planning and Programs Policy Framework* pursuant to section 26(2)(c) of the *Health Services Act 2016*.

2. Applicability

This policy is applicable to Health Service Providers that provide maternity services and child health services.

The requirements contained within this policy are applicable to the services purchased from contracted health entities where it is explicitly stated in the contract between the contracted health entity and the State of Western Australia or Health Service Provider. The State of Western Australia or Health Service Provider contract manager is responsible for ensuring that any obligation to comply with this policy by the contracted health entity is accurately reflected in the relevant contract and managed accordingly.

3. Policy Requirements

Health Service Providers must ensure:

- all health professionals employed or engaged in providing maternity, paediatric and child health services up to 12 months of age:
 - complete the Safe Infant Sleeping eLearning Package prior to providing maternity, paediatric or child health services
 - complete the Safe Infant Sleeping eLearning Package every three years or sooner following major changes to the national recommendations
 - provide evidence based best practice safe infant sleeping education, recommendations and discharge advice to parents and/or carers on safe infant sleeping risk reduction strategies during the antenatal and postnatal period, including during home visits; and up to the infant corrected age of one year
 - document the provision of safe infant sleeping education, recommendations and discharge advice in the patient's health record

- volunteers engaged to provide maternity, paediatric and child health services for infants up to 12 months of age undertake training regarding safe infant sleeping practices, prior to the provision of these services and every 3 years thereafter.

4. Compliance Monitoring

Health Service Providers are required to monitor their compliance with this policy by using the Safe Infant Sleeping Compliance Tool provided in section 5: Related Documents.

The Chief Nursing and Midwifery Office, on behalf of the System Manager, will require that Health Service Providers demonstrate that the relevant staff have undertaken the required training and provide information regarding the number of Severity Assessment Code 1 and 2 incidents related to unsafe infant sleeping and the actions taken to address the recommendations. This data is to be provided at the end of June each year. The information will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy.

5. Related Documents

The following documents are mandatory pursuant to this policy:

- [Safe Infant Sleeping eLearning Package](#)
- [Safe Infant Sleeping Compliance Tool](#)

6. Supporting Information

The following information is not mandatory but informs and/or supports the implementation of this policy:

- [Safe Infant Sleeping Guideline](#)
- [Safe Infant Sleeping Brochure](#)

7. Definitions

The following definition(s) are relevant to this policy. For further information regarding key terms please refer to the *Safe Infant Sleeping Guideline*.

Term	Definition
Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy (SUDI)	SUDI is a broad term used to describe the sudden and unexpected death of a baby up to the age of 12 months, for which the cause is not immediately obvious. The only means to find out the reason why a baby has died suddenly and unexpectedly is to perform an autopsy, review the clinical history and to investigate the circumstances of death, including the death scene, thoroughly. Following this thorough investigation, some deaths are explained, such as accidental deaths, asphyxiation by bedclothes, pillows and overlaying whilst co sleeping, infection, metabolic disorders, genetic disorders or non-accidental injury such as homicide, while others are unexplained.

Infant	Infant refers to a baby up to 12 months. In the case of premature babies, this is calculated 12 months plus the number of weeks they were preterm (one-year corrected age).
WA health system	The WA health system is comprised of: (i) the Department; (ii) Health Service Providers (North Metropolitan Health Service, South Metropolitan Health Service, Child and Adolescent Health Service, WA Country Health Service, East Metropolitan Health Service, PathWest Laboratory Medicine WA, Quadriplegic Centre and Health Support Services); and (iii) contracted health entities, to the extent they provide health services to the State.

8. Policy Contact

Enquiries relating to this policy may be directed to:

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9. Document Control

Version	Published date	Review date	Amendment(s)
MP 0106/19	18 April 2019	18 April 2022	Original version
MP 0106/19 v.1.1	29 May 2019	18 April 2022	Minor: correction of hyperlinks
MP 0106/19 v.2.0	20 November 2023	November 2026	Policy review and amendments listed below.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose section amended to align with policy requirements. • Applicability section amended to include a statement on contracted health entities. • Policy requirements amended to clarify training requirements for both health professional and volunteers. • Compliance monitoring section amended to standardise reporting requirements. • Related documents: Safe Infant Sleeping eLearning Package and Safe Infant Sleeping Compliance Tool moved from supporting information to related documents. • Supporting information: Safe Infant Sleeping Standard renamed to Safe Infant Sleeping Guideline. 			
MP 0106/19 v.2.1	08 December 2023	November 2026	Amendment as listed below.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Related Document: 'Safe Infant Sleeping Compliance Tool' updated. 			

10. Approval

Approval by	Dr David Russell-Weisz, Director General, Department of Health
Approval date	23 March 2019

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