
Overview

Forensic imaging is the undertaking of radiographic images in order to collect evidence to be presented in court or at formal hearings. It includes the taking of conventional radiographic images and cross-sectional imaging. This standard covers the forensic imaging of children for signs of suspected physical abuse. Key people are those involved in the child's care and others involved in provision of services and includes the parents and carers of children being imaged. Users of this standard will need to ensure that practice reflects up to date information and policies.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. obtain referral information from the relevant agency and confirm the appropriateness of the referral
2. apply standard precautions for infection control and other appropriate health and safety measures
3. verify and document that valid written consent has been obtained in relation to forensic imaging examinations in accordance with national and local guidelines
4. provide key people with appropriate information regarding the imaging procedure
5. communicate with the child and/or key people in a way that is appropriate to their needs
6. clearly explain the procedure and possible outcomes to key people, including risk, benefits and limitations
7. ensure that confidentiality is maintained in relation to the present case under judicial consideration
8. undertake the imaging in accordance with national guidelines to obtain radiographic evidence
9. where required, apply appropriate techniques with the child in order to acquire high quality images
10. ensure the images acquired are of high quality in order to be used for diagnostic purposes
11. recognise any signs and symptoms of psychological distress in the child and/or key people and take the appropriate action
12. document the findings and take appropriate action in line with national guidelines
13. explain the importance of follow-up imaging to key people involved in the child's care and ensure that procedures are in place to facilitate the child's return for the follow-up examination
14. apply correct procedures to maintain continuity of radiographic evidence from the start of the examination to its use in the court
15. ensure that correct procedures are followed to maintain standards of digital evidence
16. ensure that all necessary documentation is completed for the forensic radiographic examination
17. produce written statements and contemporaneous notes that adhere to legal requirements
18. record, collate and prepare appropriate information, documentation and images for transfer or storage according to

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local protocols

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. legal, organisational and policy requirements relevant to your role, the role of others in your organisation and the activities being carried out
2. the relevant national and local standards, guidelines, policies, procedures and evidence-base that are available and how and when they should be accessed
3. the legal requirements for radiographic images to be used in court
4. the legal requirements for standards of digital evidence
5. continuity of evidence, including authenticity and integrity of evidence, throughout the forensic radiographic examination
6. the national guidelines for forensic radiographic imaging and how to implement these locally in forensic practice
7. the documentation and processes required to maintain continuity of evidence
8. the legal requirements of a written statement and contemporaneous notes
9. the requirement for written consent for forensic imaging purposes
10. the present case under judicial consideration in relation to forensic radiographic imaging
11. how to give evidence in court and the roles of expert witness, professional witness and witness
12. the psychological aspects of forensic imaging and the impact this may have on individuals, children and key people
13. signs and symptoms of stress and how to minimise the risk of post-traumatic stress disorder on self, colleagues, and key people
14. the limitations of your own knowledge and experience and the importance of operating within your scope of practice
15. how to communicate with individuals and agencies involved in the process of forensic imaging
16. how to adapt communication styles, ask questions, and listen carefully in ways which are appropriate for the needs of the child and/or key people
17. methods of communicating difficult and complex information to children and/or key people
18. the importance of providing key people with opportunities to ask questions and increase their understanding

19. the information that should be given to key people before, during and on completion of the examination
20. the medico-legal justification for the referral for forensic imaging
21. the indications for a skeletal survey for suspected physical abuse in children
22. the technical requirements for undertaking a skeletal survey for suspected physical abuse in children
23. the modalities used for the imaging of suspected physical abuse in children
24. the requirements for follow-up imaging for suspected physical abuse in children
25. the injuries indicative of suspected physical abuse in children
26. the differential diagnoses that mimic suspected physical abuse in children
27. image interpretation in relation to forensic imaging and cross-sectional imaging and how to identify abnormalities on images and take appropriate action
28. the protocols for imaging children
29. how to keep full, accurate and clear records in line with organisational procedures

External Links

This standard links with the following dimension within the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (October 2004):
Dimension: HWB6 Assessment and Treatment Planning

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Suite Clinical Imaging

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