

Information for parents and carers about

# Paediatric Outpatient Parenteral Antibiotic Therapy (pOPAT)

Royal Hospital for Children, Glasgow



## Background

Your child has a serious infection. Antibiotics are a medicine that fight infection. We are more likely to cure the infection if we give your child antibiotics into their vein. The length of time your child will need antibiotics for will depend on the type of infection they have. The doctors will tell you how long this will be. We will give the antibiotic into the vein by the same sort of tube that they have had in hospital. This will likely be a cannula or a PICC (Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter).

We do not think that your child needs to be in hospital for any other reason, and you have agreed that you are happy to look after them at home. This means that we can let your child go home. Your child will still have the cannula or PICC we have been using in the hospital. We will check it before your child goes home, to make sure that it is working and that the area around it looks healthy. We will cover it with a dressing and a bandage.

## What will happen next?

We will give you an appointment to come back to the hospital the day after your child goes home. We will give you hospital appointments for every day that your child needs antibiotics into their vein. Make sure that you have the first appointment for your child and that you are able to bring them to it **before** leaving the hospital. From Monday to Friday, we will make an appointment for your child to come to ward 1C at the Royal Hospital for Children. On Saturday and Sunday, we will make an appointment for your child to come back to the Clinical Decision Unit (CDU).



## Coming to Ward 1C or the Clinical Decision Unit (CDU)

When your child comes to their appointment(s) they will see one of the nurses. Your nurse will ask you how your child is. They will check their observations (heart rate and blood pressure). They will check the cannula or PICC and give your child their antibiotic. This will usually be the same antibiotic that we gave your child in hospital. Some children may need blood tests to check how they are doing. We will let you know if your child needs more blood tests before you go home.

Let your nurse know if you have any worries about your child or if you want to talk about their treatment plan. They can arrange for a doctor to see your child.

A doctor will see your child two times a week, or more if this is needed.

## After your child has finished their antibiotics

One of the doctors will see your child at the end of their antibiotic treatment. They will remove the cannula or PICC. They will arrange for your child to have a follow-up clinic appointment if this is needed.

## Looking after your child at home


Try not to get the cannula or PICC wet (no swimming, if bathing your child try to keep the site away from the water). If the area where the cannula or PICC goes in becomes red, swollen or hurts, let the nurse know. If the cannula comes out at home press the area firmly using cotton wool, then put a plaster on it. If your child is well and the bleeding stops you do not need to do anything else until their next appointment. You can put the cannula in the household waste bin.

## What to look out for and what to do if you are worried about your child

You should look out for the following new signs in your child: **rash, new fever (temperature of or above 38°C), vomiting (being sick) or diarrhoea.**

If you are worried about your child when at home, but you do not think that your child needs to see a doctor straight away you can call the hospital switchboard (**☎ 0141 201 0000**). Ask to speak to a member of the hospital team looking after your child. We will give you the details of the team looking after your child before you go home.

It is very unlikely that your child will become more unwell again. If they do, and if they have any of the signs in the box below, they need to see a doctor straight away. Call **☎ 999** or bring them straight to the Emergency Department.

 <p><b>RED</b></p>	<p><b>If your child has any of these signs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has blue lips, is pale, mottled (blotchy) or feels cold to touch</li><li>• Is finding it very hard to breathe - grunting, or is too breathless to talk or feed</li><li>• Has a fit or seizure</li><li>• Is not responding to you, is hard to wake or cannot stay awake, is confused or agitated</li><li>• Has a weak, high-pitched or constant cry</li><li>• Has a rash that does not go away when you press on it (do the Glass Test)</li><li>• Has neck stiffness (doesn't want to move their head) and, or a bulging 'soft spot'</li></ul>	<p><b>You need help now:</b></p> <p>Take your child to the nearest Hospital Emergency Department or phone <b>☎ 999</b>.</p>
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