

ANAESTHESIA: PARENTS ATTENDING THE INDUCTION OF - CHW

POLICY AND PROCEDURE[®]

DOCUMENT SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

- The members of the Department of Anaesthesia recognise the contribution parents can make in supporting their child at the induction of their child's anaesthetic.
- Parental presence at induction is generally encouraged and is at the discretion of the Anaesthetist. Under some circumstances the anaesthetist may consider parental presence to be a disadvantage to the child. These circumstances might include:
 - Anaesthesia for emergency procedures, when complications are more likely to arise.
 - During the induction of young infants.

Circumstances should be discussed beforehand, and an agreement made between the parent and the Anaesthetist that ensures the child's best interest.

The decision for a parent to be present at induction of anaesthesia is a joint decision between the anaesthetist and the parent, with the anaesthetist retaining the final decision based on factors of safety for the child.

CHANGE SUMMARY

- Due for mandatory review – minor word change on page 2 to remove 'over-boots'.

READ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- All clinical nursing staff are to read and acknowledge they understand the contents of this policy. All clinical medical staff are to be aware of this policy.

This document reflects what is currently regarded as safe practice. However, as in any clinical situation, there may be factors which cannot be covered by a single set of guidelines. This document does not replace the need for the application of clinical judgement to each individual presentation.

Approved by:	SCHN Policy, Procedure and Guideline Committee	
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This Policy / Procedure may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time. Compliance with this Policy / Procedure is mandatory.

Introduction

The members of the Department of Anaesthesia recognise the contribution parents can make in supporting their child at the induction of their child's anaesthetic. The primary determinant of the child's care is that of safety and the overall best interests of the patient. Anaesthetists recognise the parents' commitment to a positive experience for their child, and have longstanding history of allowing a parent to attend their child's induction. Parents should also recognise however that a distraught parent present at induction may not necessarily be in the best interests of the child. A calm, supportive parent, however, can be a definite asset.

Policy and Procedure

- If appropriate, parents are encouraged to attend the induction of the child. This should be discussed beforehand and an agreement made between the parent and the anaesthetist that ensures the child's best interest.
- **Only one parent** will be able to accompany their child to the induction bay due to limitation of space and suitable support staff for the parent.
- Under some circumstances the anaesthetist may consider parental presence to be a disadvantage to the child. These circumstances might include:
 - Anaesthesia for emergency procedures, when complications are more likely to arise.
 - During the induction of young infants.
In general infants under 6-8 months of age rarely benefit from parental presence during induction. The increased risk of anaesthesia in this age group would also suggest parental attendance may not be appropriate during this induction. However, it may be appropriate for the comfort of the parent. Once again, this should be discussed with the anaesthetist.
 - Parental attendance might also not be appropriate during the induction of children who have specific conditions, such as known syndromes or airway problems, which may make the anaesthetic induction particularly difficult.
- It should also be recognised that some parents do not wish to be present at the induction of their child and they should be encouraged to exercise this right not to attend in the interest of their child and themselves.

The decision for a parent to be present at induction of anaesthesia is a joint decision between the anaesthetist and the parent, with the anaesthetist retaining the *final* decision based on factors of safety for the child.

- Parents or carers accompanying their children to the induction bay must wear a blue over gown tied securely at the back and a hat that covers all their hair. Parents or carers should proceed directly to the anaesthetic bay accompanied by a member of the operating team or a volunteer and must leave the anaesthetic bay accompanied by a member of staff or a volunteer and be escorted directly back to their point of entry.

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