

# Interprofessional Clinical Policy & Procedure Manual

<b>Policy &amp; Procedure: Adoption</b>	
Developed By: Maternal Child	Number: 2 – 5 – 4340
Date of Origin:	Review Date: September 2010, May 2013, January 2016, May 2018, June 2019
	Revision Date:
Approved By: Maternal Child Committee, GMCH & NWHC MAC	

## Policy Statement

Wellington Health Care Alliance will strive to ensure that the physical, emotional and psychosocial needs of the birth parent(s), adoptive parent(s) and infant are identified and met during the adoptive process. Legal and risk management issues surrounding the adoptive process will be maintained.

## See also:

Policy and Procedure: Apprehension of Newborn by Family and Children's Services # 2-5-4220  
Policy and Procedure: Issuing & Monitoring of Infant Ontario Health Insurance Registration Forms # 1-5-900

## Responsibility

Nursing  
Physician

## Special Considerations

All staff are responsible for providing a consistent approach to the management of situations related to adoption. The principles of confidentiality apply to all aspects of the adoption process for the infant and the birth and adoptive parent(s).

## Definitions

**Licensee:** holder of a license issued under the Child and Family Services Act to enable them to place children for adoption

**Biological mother:** mother giving up infant

**Adoptive parent(s):** parent(s) chosen and approved to adopt infant

**Open Adoptions:** Adoptions where all parties involved know details of each other and have established a plan of interaction with each other after the birth of the infant. Private and Family and Children Services adoption licensees process these types of adoptions.

**Family and Children's Services (F&CS) Adoptions:** Adoption where parents choose to work with F&CS instead of a private adoption licensee. These adoptions are either open or closed.

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**Closed Adoption:** The adoptive parent(s) have no information regarding the birth mother. The birth mother may receive various prospective parent profiles from which to choose. These profiles contain general information about the adoption and birth mothers do not have identifying data.

## Procedure:

### Birth Mother

If the birth mother states on admission that she plans for an adoption process or she is undecided and/or has made no arrangements for the infant, then proceed as follows:

1. For planned adoption through Family & Children's Services (F&CS), review patient chart and birth alerts for any plans that have been made. Notify F&CS if required. Social work referral can be initiated (NWHC sites).
2. For planned adoptions through private licensee contact their office including the weekend. Notify licensee of admission of birth mother and the birth of the infant.
3. For unplanned adoptions contact the on call staff at F&CS of Guelph and Wellington County (519 824 2410). For NWHC sites, a referral should also be made to Social Work.
4. Birth parent(s) should be offered choice as to participation in the care of their infant (e.g. seeing the baby, rooming in, feeding, care decisions and access to the infant by adoptive parent(s) while the birth mother is still in the hospital)
5. Facilitate the birth parent(s) plans for care and custody of the infant. Support will be provided to try and meet the psychosocial and emotional needs of the birth parent(s) by providing a supportive environment, privacy, support and referral to counselling services. Parental support for decision-making regarding the plan of care for the infant may be provided by appropriate support persons such as the licensee.

### Admission of Infant

1. Infant will be admitted to the most responsible physician
2. Information regarding the infant is not to be provided to any party unless they are directly involved in the hospital care of the infant or in the adoption process or the legal guardian or substitute decision maker for the infant
3. Ensure that the "Consent for Discharge of Newborn" form is obtained from licensee and or F&CS and that the birth mother signs prior to discharge from hospital. Purpose of form should be explained to the birth mother.
4. Place medical form on newborn chart as supplied by licensee or F&CS to be filled out by MRP

### Mother's Consent

Obtain consent of the biological mother to release the infant on the form supplied by the licensee (as per point # 3 above). Witness this consent and retain a copy for the infant's Chart.

See also WHCA Apprehension Policy #2-5-4220 as applicable.

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## Ontario Health Card

### For Confidential Adoptions:

Ontario Health Coverage form is completed by the nurse with available information

- Baby's surname - same as mother
- First name (if known)
- Gender
- Date of Birth
- Birth Mother's surname
- Mother's Health Card number

*The bottom tear-off portion is NOT to be detached and the birth mother should NOT be informed of the infant's Health number. The birth mother's signature is not required. The form should be clearly marked "ADOPTION" on the top front of the form and the intact, complete form returned to Service Ontario by the hospital with regular health card submissions.*

*The health card number is not given to either the birth mother nor the adoptive parents. The adoption agency/licensee will make arrangements for replacement health insurance form.*

**For known (open) adoptions:** The Ontario Health Card form is completed as per normal procedure. Either birth parent can fill out the top section and "adoption" is not indicated on the form.

"**Notice of Live Birth**" is completed electronically and reflects the proper information i.e., birth mother's name etc.

"**Statement of Live Birth**" must be completed by the biological parent(s) within 30 days of birth.

### Identabands

Infant's original identaband, with number matching mother's identaband issued at time of birth, will be placed on the infant. If biological mother doesn't wish to wear the corresponding identaband, it may be kept in her chart.

### Visiting

Any visits between the adoptive parent(s) and the infant will occur after the birth mother has left the hospital unless otherwise specified by the birth parent(s)

Unless otherwise specified, all adoptions are treated as confidential. In the case of an open adoption, some aspects of confidentiality may not be necessary. It is important to check with the licensee or case worker from F&CS prior to proceeding with more openness.

- Check the identification of the licensee representative or F&CS worker prior to making visiting arrangements
- The licensee representative or F&CS worker will introduce the adoptive family to hospital staff

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- If it is not an open adoption, conceal the infant's ID bands with tape and remove the crib card and any identifying documentation from the crib in preparation for the adoptive parent(s) visit.
- An additional set of identabands will be created upon introduction and confirmed identification of adoptive parent(s). This set of bands will list the infant's birth date and time of birth, gender and adoptive parent's name(s). Bands will be applied to adoptive parent(s) and infant and remain in place until discharge. (The infant will retain their original bands but they will be taped as noted above).
- Ensure that visits take place in a private area

## Discharge and Release of Infant to Approved Person

- Confirmation of identification of the person authorized to receive the baby (licensee or delegate) is required. No chart copy of the identification is necessary, however documentation noting type of identification reviewed should be made in the chart.
- Before releasing the infant, **examine and retain a copy** of the following documents:
  - Consent for release of the infant (above)
  - Approval form for Proposed Placement as provided by the Ministry of Child and Youth Services (provided by F&CS worker or licensee representative)
  - Health Report as required and supplied by the Ministry of Child and Youth Services.
  - Valid Licensee's License with expiry date and or letter of authorization if delegate completing placement (Ensure licence has not expired. If it has, notify F&CS explaining adoption plan and situation).
  - Letter of authorization if delegate completing placement

## Copies of the following are to be given to the Licensee or approved Delegate:

- The Ministry of Child and Youth Services Health Report
- Infant's appointments (if applicable)
- Infant Hearing Test results (if available)
- Newborn Screening Information

## Documentation:

- Date and time of discharge
- Documentation in the multidisciplinary notes should reflect all documents reviewed, telephone conversations, visits to baby (by whom and supervision of such visits) and noted identification of person to whom baby is discharged.
- Related teaching
- Follow up appointments given
- Completed Public Health Forms

**Note: Copies of all required forms must be on the chart prior to release of the infant.**

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## Key Words:

Adoption

Family and Children's Services

Licensee