GUIDELINE

Relinquishment for Adoption

Scope (Staff):	Nursing and Medical Staff
Scope (Area):	NICU KEMH, NICU PCH, NETS WA

Child Safe Organisation Statement of Commitment

CAHS commits to being a child safe organisation by applying the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. This is a commitment to a strong culture supported by robust policies and procedures to reduce the likelihood of harm to children and young people.

This document should be read in conjunction with this disclaimer

Background

Parents considering relinquishment are entitled to a sensitive and non-judgemental response from all staff. Lifelong grief can result from unresolved issues associated with this emotionally, socially and legally complex situation.

Key points

- Department for Communities, Child Protection and Family Support (CPFS) and WA Health have a joint responsibility for achieving safe outcomes for newborns and families. As adoption is a sensitive area with differing moral boundaries in the community, CPFS and WA Health workers must maintain a professional approach.
- Birth Parents (including single parents) may consider adoption as an option for their babies due to various reasons such as their age, undesired pregnancy, financial and/or social hardship, cultural or religious beliefs and medical, physical or mental disability that makes raising a child difficult without support.
- Parents considering relinquishment are entitled to a sensitive, non-judgemental and non-directional response from all staff. Life-long grief can result from unresolved issues associated with this emotionally, socially and legally complex situation.
- Mothers considering relinquishment are encouraged to have their babies room in, if that is their wish; alternatively the baby will receive newborn care in the Neonatal Unit until medically fit for discharge and a suitable placement arranged (usually 72 hours).

Process

Steps	Additional Information
1. Inform the infant's social worker as soon as possible of all parents considering relinquishment.	The social worker will provide a full service as described in the Social Work Protocol.
2. Once the mother has been interviewed (antenatally or postnatally) by the Adoptions Services of Department for Child Protection, they will arrange a pre-adoptive foster carer.	Foster care is usually arranged within 24-48 hours. The legal requirements of using interpreters may cause delays.
3. Plan for baby's discharge clearance prior to Pre-adoption foster carer's arrival.	Responsibility of the bedside nurse in collaboration with medical staff.
4. The nurse caring for the infant provides 2 sets of hand/footprints and photographs (2) for social worker.	The photographs and footprints are given to the mother or Adoption Services by the Social Worker for future access purposes.
5. Social work is to ensure all relevant documentation is sent to Department for Communities, Adoption Services, Director Best Practice Unit	Documents: Out of Home Care Placement Authority Form, Birth Registration form, Neonatal discharge summary and unclaimed mementos.
6. Nursing staff arrange VMS follow – up of baby arranged (if in metro area), or refer to Child Health Nurse for follow-up.	Ensure completion of the : 'CHECKLIST: RELINQUISHMENT FOR ADOPTION' (Appendix 1)

References and related external legislation, policies, and guidelines
WNHS Clinical Guideline: Adoption: Relinquishment For

This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.

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Reviewer / Team:	Neonatology, WNHS Social Work		
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Appendix 1: Relinquishment For Adoption Checklist

Task	Staff Responsible	Date Completed/ Initials
Referral to Social Worker: Name:…… Date:……	Nursing/medical staff	
Family offered information and counselling	Social Worker	
Contacted Dept for Communities, Child Protection and Family Support, Adoption Services worker will ensure that Placement Authority form completed, a copy filed in the baby's chart and original kept with Adoption Services.	Social Worker	
Birth Registration Form completed by mother. Social worker to send copy, together with Family Tax Benefit claim to Adoption Services.	Social Worker	
Plan for baby's discharge clearance prior to Pre-adoption foster carer's arrival.	Medical and Nursing Staff	
Two sets of mementos i.e. photographs (2), hand and footprints for mother and for baby (to be given to social worker who will send to Adoption Services) or if mother is available give her copy to her directly.	Nursing staff	
Pre-adoptive foster carer identification sighted and their name, address and phone number and date of transfer of baby recorded in baby's chart.	Nursing staff	
VMS follow –up of baby arranged (if in metro area) Or refer to Child Health Nurse for follow-up.	Nursing staff	
Give the pre-adoptive foster carer yellow/blue copies of the Neonatal Discharge Summary for Child Health nurse and VMS. **NO INFORMATION ABOUT MATERNAL HISTORY TO BE GIVEN TO PRE-ADOPTIVE FOSTER CARER**	Nursing staff	
Advise obstetric ward coordinator of baby's discharge to Pre-adoption foster care and ensure that local CHN is aware of Relinquishment and doesn't do a home visit.	Social Worker	
If baby is being discharged after hours, nurse/midwife to sight completed checklist and sign.	Social Worker	
Completed checklist sighted. Signature (SW/Nurse):_____		