



COUNCIL CABINET
13 MAY 2003

Report of the Director of Social Services

Children Living With HIV Policy

RECOMMENDATION

1. To adopt the Children Living with HIV Policy for Social Services staff.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2. This report presents the Children Living with HIV Policy. This departmental Policy is applicable to all children with whom staff in Social Services come into contact.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Policy for staff working with Children Living with HIV provides up-to-date research, consultation with young people infected with HIV and medical information.
- 3.2 It addresses the needs of those both infected and affected by HIV.
- 3.3 It outlines principles and good practice to prevent the prejudice, discrimination and ostracism faced by those infected with HIV or affected by carers and family members who test positive for HIV.
- 3.4 The Policy outlines current knowledge on transmitting HIV infection and ways of reducing this risk. In context, the risk of becoming infected by hepatitis is much greater than HIV. Advice is outlined for carers.
- 3.5 Due to advances in medication, we may now consider HIV to be a long-term illness rather than a life-threatening condition. However, there is a rising trend of infection and the numbers of children infected with HIV has not been updated by health since the emergence of highly active anti-retroviral therapeutic (HAART) medication in the late 1990's.
- 3.6 Confidentiality holds a prominent place in this Policy because of the social implications of HIV status becoming known. Children with HIV are fearful of being ostracised by school, friends and of getting into trouble for sharing the family secret.

- 3.7 Children living with HIV (infected of affected) are Children in Need under the Children Act 1989 and are likely to become young carers to parents and carers infected with HIV. This Policy covers services available to all.
- 3.8 Copies of the Children Living with HIV Policy are available on Derbynet at <http://172.16.1.41/locdem/meetings/meetingadmin/Mdisplay.asp?refnum=373> or on request from Jason Spencer, tel 255466 jason.spencer@derby.gov.uk.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4. No other options were considered.

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Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. Costs of publication of the policy will be kept to a minimum and met within existing budgets.

Legal

- 2.1 Relevant law is outlined in the Policy (Section 9). Legal Services advice has been sought to make sure we do not discriminate against foster carers and adopters who are HIV positive.
- 2.2 Ongoing legal advice will need to be sought when there are disagreements between Social Services staff and children, or those with parental responsibility, about whether to disclose information on HIV status.

Personnel

3. None.

Corporate Themes and Priorities

4. This Policy address the information and social inclusion needs of young people who are likely to be discriminated against because of their 'in care' or HIV status. There is a recognised link between sexual ill health, poverty and social exclusion.

This accords with the Council's key themes of **safer and healthier communities** and **a fairer society**. It also supports the Council's priorities of **improving children's and young people's prospects** and **improving life chances for disadvantaged people and communities**.