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## BIRTH CENTRE ABDUCTION GUIDELINE

<b>Document Reference No:</b>	PTHB / MAT 027	
<b>Version No:</b>	7	
<b>Issue Date:</b>	December 2021	
<b>Review Date:</b>	December 2024	
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<b>Approved By:</b>	Women and Children's Policy and Procedures Oversight Group	
<b>Approval Date:</b>		
<b>Document Type:</b>	Guidelines	Operational
<b>Scope:</b>	All midwives working in Powys and staff in Community Service Group	

The latest approved version of this document is online.  
If the review date has passed please contact the Author for advice.

### Version Control:

Version	Summary of Changes/Amendments	Issue Date
1	Initial Issue	Mar 2005
2	No change	Jan 2007
3	Format changed updated with national guidance	July 2008
4	Format changes only	Feb 2012
5	Updated with new organizational structures and guidance, Format changed and changed to a guideline.	July 2015
6	Reviewed by Lead Midwife – No changes made	March 2018
7	<p>Reviewed by Lead Midwife for Safeguarding and Head of Midwifery and Sexual Health services</p> <p>7.1 Updated with Silver Operational On-Call as per Handbook</p> <p>7.2 Updated with Civil Contingency Manager to use PTHB Incident response action cards</p> <p>7.3 Updated with Security Oversight Group for risk of baby abduction to be considered as part of the Site Security Plans and CCTV implementation</p> <p>7.4 Update with Clinical Service group to reflect current Organisational structure</p> <p>7.5 Reference to CODE PINK as all Wales terminology</p> <p>7.6 Updated with Incident Notification / handling in line with Patient Safety framework</p> <p>7.7 Updated with Action Card templates to support roles and responsibilities for the response</p>	Sept 2021

## ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

### Key Individuals/Groups Involved in Developing this Document

<b>Role / Designation</b>
Midwifery Management and Leadership team
Lead Midwife for Safeguarding
Midwifery Operational Team Leaders
Support Service Manager
PTHB Safeguarding team
Security Oversight group
Community Services Managers
Silver Operational on Call forum
Assistant Director for Support Services
Civil Contingency Manager
Switchboard Manager
PTHB Safeguarding Team

### Circulated to the following for Consultation

<b>Date</b>	<b>Role / Designation</b>
04/08/2021	Community Service Group
27/07/2021	Civil Contingency Manager
04/08/2021	Silver Operational On-Call
28/09/2021	PTHB Security Oversight Group
06/12/2021	PTHB Midwives via Midwifery Policies and Procedures group
18/10/2021	Women's and Children's Policies and Procedures group
	Safeguarding Team
	Brecon Switchboard

### Evidence Base

<b>Evidence Base</b>

## Impact Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment Summary					
	No impact	Adverse	Differential	Positive	Statement
					<p>Please remember policy documents are published to both the <b>intranet</b> and <b>internet</b>.</p>
<b>Age</b>					<p>The version on the internet must be translated to Welsh.</p>
<b>Disability</b>					
<b>Gender reassignment</b>					
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>					
<b>Race</b>					
<b>Religion/ Belief</b>					
<b>Sex</b>					
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>					
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>					
<b>Welsh Language</b>					
<b>Human Rights</b>					
Risk Assessment Summary					
<p><b>Have you identified any risks arising from the implementation of this policy / procedure / written control document?</b></p> <p>If yes, note the risk/s and action taken to mitigate. If no please state no risks identified</p>					
<p><b>Have you identified any Information Governance issues arising from the implementation of this policy / procedure / written control document?</b></p> <p>As above</p>					
<p><b>Have you identified any training and / or resource implications as a result of implementing this?</b></p> <p>Please record any training or resource issues /requirements associated with the implementation of your document</p>					

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## Birth Centre Abduction Guidelines

### 1. Introduction

Infant and child abductions are rare, however, the trauma and publicity surrounding such events highlights the importance of ensuring that, should an incident occur, PTHB has a comprehensive, easy to follow response plan to:

- Ensure that staff are aware of how to raise the alarm quickly as time is critical.
- Ensure that staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Ensure that staff are deployed effectively to conduct a search of the area.
- Ensure effective communication and co-operation between Health Board staff, the police and security services.
- Ensure effective communication with other agencies.

Implementation of the above will aim to:

- Facilitate the speedy return of the infant/child to a place of safety.
- Ensure that the parents/carers of an abducted infant/child are kept fully informed of the situation and are appropriately supported.
- In the event of suspicion that one or more parents/carers may be the perpetrator of the abduction, the above ensure effective communication between agencies.

### 2. Objective

The overall aim is to ensure safe and effective care is provided to the mother and baby in the immediate period following birth and at anytime where she or baby receives care with a Powys Birth Centre.

### 3. Definitions

**PTHB** – Powys Teaching Health Board

**Abduction:** the criminal act of taking someone away by force or deception.

**Lockdown** is the process of controlling the movement, access and egress of people around NHS property in response to an identified risk, threat or hazard that might impact on the safety and security of people and assets or, in deed the capacity of that facility to continue to operate. Lockdown can be partial,

progressive or full depending on the situation and identified risk, threat or hazard.

#### **4. Role/Responsibilities**

All midwives should ensure that they are familiar with the agreed process, have information and any necessary paperwork available and provided to the relevant authorities should a baby go missing from a Powys Birth Centre.

##### **4.1 Midwifery Procedures for the Security & Identification of Infants**

It is a responsibility of all midwives to inform women and their families about the need for vigilance regarding the safety of babies and personal property whilst in the Birth Centre. Women must be advised to report anyone acting in a suspicious manner to a member of staff. A generic letter regarding security must be given to all women receiving postnatal care within all Powys Birth Centre's (Appendix 1) and a laminated copy displayed in all Birth Centre's. This should be documented in the notes.

#### **Security**

- Babies should remain with the Mother at all times and the mother should accompany the baby if it needs to leave the ward for any reason.
- Staff must wear a clear identification badge with a current photograph at all times when working for Powys Teaching Health Board.
- Women should have an opportunity to meet all midwives and aim to meet/know who their health visitor will be during the antenatal period who are likely to provide care for her and her baby in the postnatal period.
- Women should be advised not to hand over their baby to anyone they do not know whilst they are in hospital.
- The Birth Centre door remains locked at all times and visitors must be advised to ring the bell for admission, this affords the opportunity to vet all callers to the Birth Centre.
- In line with Fire Procedures any accompany partners, visitor's or staff who are not normally part of the team should complete sign in the attendance book.
- All non PTHB attendees (including Contractors) to be accompanied at all time when they are in attendance in the Birth Centre.

- Staff must not give out the security code to any member of the public.
- Women should also be advised not to admit any strangers claiming to be health professionals into their home who are not known to them or do not show identification.

### **Identification**

- Immediately following birth, it is the responsibility of the midwife to ensure identification bands are completed.
- Three matching numbered identification-bands especially for this purpose must be checked with the mother.
- Two are then attached to baby's ankles and one to mother's wrist.
- The band number should be recorded in the care pathway
- The bands should be checked when care is handed from one midwife to another. This action is recorded in the baby notes.
- If either band comes off before discharge women must be advised to let a midwife know and a new set will be made. The old ones should be fixed securely inside the case notes.
- On discharge, the midwife should check all bands and remove the mother's and one baby band. These should be secured in the case notes. The third band is left in place to be checked and removed by the midwife at home on the first community visit or by the parents when home

#### **4.2 Role of Powys Midwives in the Event of infant abduction**

- Follow departmental procedures for security of newborn babies

The Midwives role immediately on receipt of a call, relating to an infant who has been abducted or identified as missing:

- Notify the Police – (9)999
- Senior Midwife will take immediate role as Co-Ordinating Officer and support the police with:
  - Provide a briefing summary of key information of the circumstances, who had access to Birth Centre in the last 24 hours
  - Secure the room (police requirement)
  - Support police with search teams
  - Comfort the mother and relatives
- Inform Midwifery Operational Team Lead to advise switchboard on 01874 622443 stating **CODE PINK**

- Contact the Operation On-call to take on role as Incident Manager
- Report any information to the Incident Manager (Operational Team Lead/ Silver Operational On Call)

### **4.3 Role of the Switchboard**

- Contact the Brecon Hospital Switchboard to alert Community Service Manager, out of hours Silver on-call and Gold on-call
- Sign post any media enquiries to PTHB communication team

### **4.4 Multi-Disciplinary Team – in Liaison with the Police**

The Multi-disciplinary Team – PTHB staff, Midwives, Nurses, Support Workers, Administration Staff and Porters will be formed into search teams to check areas with minimal disruption of potential evidence.

These teams will be set up by a Coordinating Officer and given designated search areas.

The staff will congregate in the fire assembly point and await instructions from the Coordinating Officer.

### **4.5 Involvement of PTHB Support Staff**

This will be unique for Powys and will depend on available staff in or out of hours e.g. Managers, Porters, Patient Services Teams, and Reception staff.

The role of support staff is to:

- Lockdown - Secure main doors and supervise all movement through one set of manual doors.
- CCTV are on 24 / 7 record functionality and each site has designation person trained to access the camera recording.
- All available staff to monitor secure doors (locked).
- Assist in the search teams using Hospital CAD diagrams as a checklist / confirmation that each section has been reviewed
- It is essential that area is fully searched and nobody leaves the area until the police have arrived and given permission for people to leave.

- Best practice would be to provide the Police with in and out list of the staff within the PTHB premises.

#### **4.6 Role of the Silver On-Call (Incident Manager)**

The role of the Silver On Call operational on call manager will be to take the role of Incident Manager.

All communication will be through the Incident Manager who will:

- Liaise with the Senior THB Executives
- Liaise with the Police
- Inform duty officer at Social Services
- Report incident to PTHB Safeguarding Team
- Report as Serious Untoward Incident – complete form and Datix
- Issue stand down orders

Opportunity will be provided for staff and women to reflect on the situation, and professional support and advice offered by the midwifery management and leadership team.

### **5. Involvement of other agencies**

#### **5.1 Involvement of the Police**

- To advise the Incident Manager
- If required, manage entrances/exits  
Manage traffic in & out of the site
- Provide specialist search facility  
Take charge of the incident
- Interview witnesses
- Examine the crime scene

#### **5.2 Involvement of Local Authority Social Services**

Duty Officer to be notified of the abduction of a baby. If baby is found/is returned to PTHB premises, the Incident Manager is to inform:

- Police
- Local Authority Social Services
- PTHB Safeguarding Team
- Person with parental responsibility/carer/relatives
- The health professional in charge of the area will assess the child's condition and initiate any medical treatment

necessary. This will follow consultation with the Police to ensure that contamination of evidence does not occur.

## **6. Training**

All Powys Maternity staff will aware of about the risk of infant abduction and site orientation for the environments they are working in.

Annual schedule of training will be carried out locally in the form of practice drills, undertaken to ensure staff are familiar with the relevant action in the event of abduction.

Awareness of the guideline will be part of mandatory training for midwives and support staff.

### **Staff Awareness**

Officer to be notified of the abduction of a baby. If baby is found/is returned to PTHB premises. Six annual mock drills will be undertaken in hours and out of hours across varied PTHB sites with Powys Birth Centre's involving named Midwife for safeguarding, midwives and community service groups.

The planning of each drill to be supported Named Midwife for Safeguarding, Support Service Manager, W&C Governance lead and Civil Contingencies Manager. Each drill to be supported by a scribe as Logistics to maintain a written log / debrief for learning and development.

## **7. Monitoring Compliance/Audit**

Compliance with these guidelines will be monitored by the Datix reporting system and any issues raised through the mock drill.

## **8. Review and Change Control**

This document will be reviewed every three years or earlier should audit results or changes to legislation / practice within PTHB indicate otherwise.



## Appendix 1

### SAFE SECURITY OF YOUR BABY

Dear Mother,

Congratulations on the recent birth of your baby.

During your stay in the Birth Centre, the follow steps will be followed to ensure the security of your baby.

Two name bands will be placed on your baby immediately after birth, and a third matching one will be attached to you. The labels on your baby will be checked with each handover of midwifery staff and recorded in your baby's notes. **PLEASE INFORM THE MIDWIFE if a label accidentally comes off.**

Please do not leave your baby alone or allow contact with a professional unknown to you.  
Please alert midwives if someone approaches that you do not know.  
All Powys Birth Centre's have security doors / locked key pads that are in operation at all times.  
All Powys Birth Centre's have open visiting times.  
Please remind your visitors that they should take care when entering the Birth Centre not to inadvertently let unauthorised visitors in.

All Hospital security measures will be adhered to, e.g. locking doors specifically at all times, which may mean midwifery staff liaise with hospital staff to highlight mother and baby in residence.

Under the Hospital CCTV provision there will 24-hour CCTV recording on a continuous

**Your role is vital to the SAFETY and SECURITY of your baby**

Please report any problems with these principles to the Head of Midwifery & Sexual Health Telephone number: 01597 828755

Yours sincerely

Powys Midwives



## Appendix 2

### Checklist for Mock Abduction Code Pink

**Date:**  
**Lead for Mock Abduction:**  
**Personnel Involved:**  
**Midwives:**  
**Hospital Staff:**  
**Administration/Support Staff:**

Checklist	Yes/No	Comments- include time each action was considered
Evidence of the baby labels secured		
Evidence of baby labels checked, especially with handover of staff		
Evidence of baby security letter available to family		
Could Midwife refer to the policy on safe security of the baby		
Could the Midwife list recent attendance to the Birth Centre		
Could the hospital staff list the recent attendances to the hospital		
Were the security measures in place for the birth Centre		
Was the CCTV in operation		
Could the Midwife list who they would call in the event of an abduction		
Could the Midwife list the actions they would take to deal with an abduction		
Could the hospital staff who took the role as coordinating officer list the actions to take in dealing with an abduction		
Could the hospital staff list the actions they would take to support an abduction		

Good Practice:

Lesson Learning:

Action Plan:

Date:

Signature:

## Appendix 3

### Quick Guide – Action Cards in the Event of Infant Abduction

PROCEDURE	RATIONALE
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Suspect an abduction</li> <li>2. Confirm abduction and raise the alarm</li> <li>3. Contact Police</li> <li>4. Inform OTL</li> <li>5. Secure entrance and exits to ward area</li> <li>6. Contact switch board to notify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Security</b></li> <li>• <b>Porters</b></li> <li>• <b>Community Service Manager, out of hours Silver on-call and Gold on-call and the locality general manager.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>Prevent delay</p> <p>Mobilise staff and co-ordinate proceedings to ensure all staff</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Midwife in charge to delegate tasks <b>e.g.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving mother of abducted infant to a private area and stay with her</li> <li>• Pursue abductor if identified</li> <li>• Check remaining areas</li> <li>• Comfort and support other ward attenders if relevant</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p>Check other infants ID bands</p>	<p>Provide support and comfort</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halt the abduction</li> <li>• Ensure infant not held elsewhere</li> </ul> <p>To reassure women during a stressful time Check identity, ensure mother and infant bands match</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Staff will not remove the empty cot or touch any of the clothing</li> </ol>	<p>Needed as evidence by the police</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Co-operate with the police</li> </ol>	<p>Aid the investigation</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Direct Media attention to Press &amp; Communications Manager via Powys Communication team</li> </ol> <p>Staff awareness to ensure all communication is handled through PTHB Communication department</p>	<p>To channel media attention via the correct sources in conjunction with the police</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Inform all when situation returns to normal</li> </ol>	<p>Facilitate return to normal duties</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Complete online 'Once for Wales' Incident notification form</li> </ol> <p>Each staff member to prepare a Statement of Events for their involvement / action taken</p>	<p>Compliance with Health Board policy</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. Arrange Debrief / support process and incident review for key members of staff involved in the process</li> </ol>	<p>Immediate follow up arrangements</p> <p>72-hour Patient Safety Huddle</p>

## Appendix 4

### Action Card 2 - Action in the Event of Infant Abduction (Midwifery Staff/OTL)

Action Card 2 – Midwifery Staff/OTL	Rationale
<b>RESPONSE TO POSSIBLE INFANT ABDUCTION TIME IS CRITICAL – RAISE THE ALARM IMMEDIATELY</b>	
Contact Police on (9)999 and request immediate Police attendance	
Initiate search of the area	
Discuss last known whereabouts of infant with parents Revisit those areas	
Contact switchboard stating 'CODE PINK – missing infant. Possible abduction' The age and last sighting of the infant/ child must be communicated along with their identity and the location.	
Lock down department i.e. no-one is allowed to enter or leave except for emergency treatment. Assign a member of staff to the exit.	
Delegate tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure mother of abducted infant is supported, moved to a private area and stay with her</li> <li>• Pursue abductor if identified</li> <li>• Comfort and support other ward attenders if relevant</li> <li>• Check other infants ID bands if relevant</li> </ul>	
Do not touch the infant's cot as this may disturb evidence	
Delegate one person to record all events including details of anyone entering or leaving the department with their reason for doing so.	
Ensure all staff aware of the incident and undertaking their responsibilities	
Assume the role of incident coordinator until a member of the Care Group Senior Management Team/duty hospital manager arrives	
Should the child/infant be found during the hospital search the incident coordinator must inform switchboard that the infant has been found stating 'missing infant found. Stand down.'	
Inform all when infant is found	Facilitate return to normal duties

## Appendix 5

### Action Card 2 - Action in the Event of Infant Abduction (Switchboard)

<b>Action Card 2 Switchboard</b>	
<b>RESPONSE TO POSSIBLE INFANT ABDUCTION TIME IS CRITICAL – RAISE THE ALARM IMMEDIATELY</b>	
Inform security and porters	
Call the relevant Response Team stating 'CODE PINK – Infant missing, possible abduction' with the age and last sighting of the infant. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Silver on call</li><li>• Operational On call (OTL)</li><li>• Head of Midwifery &amp; Sexual Health</li><li>• Clinical Director</li><li>• General Manager</li><li>• Governance Lead for W&amp;C</li><li>• Facilities Manager</li><li>• Press &amp; Communications Manager</li></ul>	

## Appendix 6

**Action Card 3 – Action in the Event of Infant Abduction  
 (Senior Manager/Clinical Site Manager)**

<b>Action Card 3 – Senior Manager/Clinical Site Manager</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
<b>RESPONSE TO POSSIBLE INFANT ABDUCTION TIME IS CRITICAL – RAISE THE ALARM IMMEDIATELY</b>	
Assume the role of incident coordinator and gather all information	
Notify the on-call executive/Chief Executive	
Be Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for the police and delegate tasks to Health Board staff	
Liaise with Press/Communications manager and identify appropriate room for media	To channel media attention via the correct sources in conjunction with the police
Liaise with site coordinators	
Infor Local Authority and PTHB Safeguarding Team	
Provide support to staff/family/carers	