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WELSH HEALTH CIRCULAR



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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STATUS: ACTION

CATEGORY: QUALITY & SAFETY

Title: Guidance for the care of children and young people with continence problems

Date of Expiry / Review: August 2025

For Action by:

LHB Chairs
LHB Chief Executives
LHB Board Secretaries
LHB Medical Directors
LHB Directors of Nursing

For Welsh Government Action (or information):

DG/Chief Executive NHS Wales
Deputy Chief Exec NHS Wales
Professional & Policy Leads
DHSS Operations Team
DHSS Comms Team
DHSS Digital Team
DHSS Delivery & Finance Team
NHS Wales Shared Services

Action required by: October 2022

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1. This circular provides guidance for health boards in respect of the provision of continence containment products for children and young people.
2. The current All Wales Children and Young People's Continence Guidance and Care Pathway has been updated in 2021
3. The new 'Guidance for the provision of continence containment products to children and young people' supersedes the previous guidance.
4. Enabling children and young people to achieve continence is crucially important. All children and young people should receive support to achieve their maximum continence potential.
5. Continence containment products should only be supplied following a full assessment and only when toilet training is not achievable.
6. It is essential that the health care professionals undertaking the assessment, of both toilet training ability and for provision of appropriate containment products to children and young people who are not able to toilet train, or have faecal and/or urinary incontinence, are sufficiently trained, experienced and competent to do so.
7. The current All Wales Children and Young People's Continence Guidance and Care Pathway contains the statement '*The maximum number of products issued will be four pads per 24 hours*'. The new guidance addresses this and contains the statement 'The number of products issued per 24 hours **would normally not** exceed four, but provision should meet assessed need.' This clinical need should be assessed by a professional trained in continence care.
8. The new guidance also incorporates the new increase of age (i.e. aged 5 years) products provision to be accessed.
9. Within Wales, there is no statutory requirement to provide containment products, resulting in each Health Board developing their own policy and guidelines. Consequently, the accompanying document aims to outline national guidance to prevent variation and discrepancy.
10. The All Wales Continence Forum have undertaken work to review the All Wales Children and Young People's Continence Guidance and Care Pathway and have recommended that the current guidance should be replaced with the newly published 'Guidance for the provision of continence containment products to children and young people' (2021) thereby removing the discrepancy in the original guidance.

11. *The 'Guidance for the provision of continence containment products to children and young people'* 2021 is a consensus document developed and supported by a range of organisations from across the UK which is accessible within the document.
12. The Guidance was revised in 2021 to NHS England organisations and is now being adopted for use in NHS Wales.

