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Designated Clinical Officer

Last Modified May 11, 2023



The Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) supports the NHS services to make sure they are meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) from 0-25 years.

The DCO listens to children and young people (CYP) and families' views and experiences in accessing NHS health services required to meet their Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

To ensure coordinated and integrated services that reflect the voice of children and young people, the DCO service improves communication and links between health, education and social care professionals.

The DCO want to hear your views about using NHS services. You can contact me directly or share your views through parent representatives, at meetings and events. For more information on the Local Area meetings please contact the DCO (details below).

The DCO team:

- Ensure robust processes are in place to allow for the early identification of children with SEND
- Ensure all health services are reflected in the Local Offer and that health providers are cooperating with the local authority in its development and review
- Coordinate the collation of health advice that contributes to the education, health and care initial assessment process
- Answer EHCP queries linked to health provision from parents and professionals
- Support NHS practitioners to contribute to any SEND tribunal challenges raised with health

Improving services and processes

- Act as a single point of contact for parents/carers, partner agencies and professionals to raise queries and concerns related to NHS health services
- Raise awareness within the NHS of the statutory responsibilities linked to SEND, through training and discussions with staff groups
- Work with NHS practitioners to improve the quality of health advice
- Monitor quality of health advice through regular audit and feedback
- Support colleagues to make sure that they are able to make reasonable adjustments for children and young people with medical conditions and SEND, in order to improve the quality of their service offer
- Work with families and providers to identify inequities or gaps in commissioned services and highlight these to local commissioning teams.

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