

PRACTICAL PEARL: Medical Clearance for Behavioral Health treatment

INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pediatricians are often asked to provide medical clearance for patients before admission to an inpatient psychiatric facility or after a child elopes from a supervised foster or group home.• DCF is working with community agencies to limit “medical clearance” requests to occasions when there’s an actual concern for illness/injury, and are suggesting that these agencies behave as a “prudent parent” might in a similar situation.• When medical clearance is needed, every effort should be made to have the child evaluated in their medical home.
INITIAL EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT BY PRIMARY CARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medical clearance should include a review of the child’s history as well as current medications and any specific active concerns.• Sexually active girls may benefit from HCG screening.• Lab and radiology testing are rarely necessary and should be dictated by clinical scenario (though STI screening and immunization updates may be offered).• Drug screening is generally not indicated for medical reasons and is not recommended unless there are signs of acute intoxication.• Request that accompanying adult (foster parent, group home worker) verify and communicate available medical information with child’s DCF office• https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/138/3/e20161570
WHEN TO REFER TO ED	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence of active intoxication• Sexual Assault in past 5 days with need (and patient consent for) evidence collection• Acute illness or injury
HOW TO REFER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• (413) 794-KIDS for subspecialty• 800-222-1222 for substance abuse/poison (med toxicity)• Family Advocacy Center Social Worker (413) 794-5070• (413) 794-8818 to speak with ED physician
WHAT TO EXPECT FROM BAYSTATE CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL VISIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of history as available from child, accompanying adult, and medical record• Safety screening• Physical exam• Pregnancy and STI screening when indicated• Initial treatment for any identified illness or injuries