



PAEDIATRICS

Paediatric Early Warning System (PEWS)

You know your child best.
We are **listening to you**

**If you are worried about your
child's condition, please tell us**



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Clinical Strategy and Programmes Division

Tús Áite do
Shábháilteacht **1** Othar
Patient Safety **1** First

What is PEWS?

Children's wards in Ireland have an early warning system called PEWS – Paediatric Early Warning System. All hospitals are using the same observation charts to record patients' vital sign measurements. A 'vital sign' is essential to life – for example, breathing and heart rate. The nurses measure your child's vital signs and record these in the observation chart. Each vital sign has a 'score' assigned to it. These scores are added together to give a total PEWS Score.

PEWS helps doctors and nurses to make decisions about the care your child may need if they become more unwell during a hospital stay. It also alerts the paediatric team to:

- Carry out a full review of your child
- Do more tests or investigations
- Make decisions and set out plans about the treatment your child needs.


Parent / carer concern

You know your child best.


You have an important role in your child's care and we will listen to you.

If you have a concern about your child's condition, including a 'gut feeling', you should tell your nurse. If there is anything you don't understand, just ask us to explain.

Don't worry if you get upset, it's ok!



I don't know what it is, but Claire just isn't herself...



Alex has been sleepy since the medication changed...

Tell us if you are worried about your child

Tips to help you describe your concerns to staff

Starting the conversation

Your nurse or doctor may be with another patient, so make sure that you have their full attention before discussing any worries.

My concerns

- Tell the nurse or doctor what you are concerned about
- Try to give them as much information as possible
- You might find the information in this leaflet helpful

I am worried that David is sleeping too much...

Reasons or solutions

Tell them what you think might be wrong and what you think might help.

Agreement

The nurse or doctor will discuss their plans with you and this will be recorded in your child's notes.

Is your child's breathing...

- Faster
- Slower
- Working harder
- Noisy?

Is your child...

- Confused or muddled
- Irritable
- Crying differently
- More sleepy
- Quieter than usual
- Saying that they don't feel right
- Behaving differently?

How does your child look?

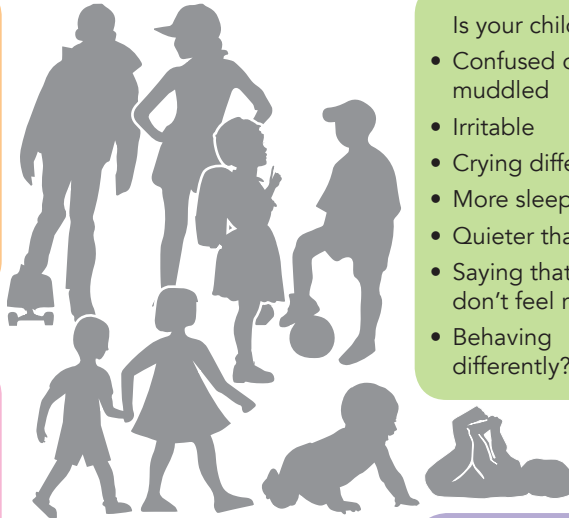
- More pale or flushed than usual
- Blotchy
- Puffy
- Sweaty
- Rash or marks on body

Is your child...

- Restless or moving around a lot
- Lying still
- In pain or saying somewhere hurts?

Have you noticed a difference in your child's...

- Wee or poo
- Eating or drinking
- Vomiting?



What to do next if you have concerns about your child

Step 1	You can: Talk to your nurse
Step 2	We will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess your child and their vital signs• Record the vital signs on the observation chart and work out their total PEWS score• Talk to you about what we find• Keep you informed and involve you in decisions
Step 3	We will: Speak to the nurse in charge or your child's doctor if needed You can: Talk to a doctor on the ward round or ask the nurse to call your child's doctor

Notes:

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We will listen to you.**