The Irish Paediatric Early Warning System

Top Tips for Safe Use

MacDonell R1 Fitzsimons J2 Horkan S3 Lambert V4

1National PEWS Coordinator, HSE
2Clinical Director Quality Improvement HSE & Chair Irish PEWS Steering Group
3NCPPN, HSE Clinical Strategy and Programmes Division
4School of Nursing and Human Sciences, Dublin City University

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: PEWS Steering & Guideline Development Groups, NCEC

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR: rachel.macdonell@hse.ie

PEWS is designed to capture, highlight and combine clinical observations into a score that helps predict children at risk of deterioration.

In order to utilise this important clinical information, clinical judgement must be applied to interpret it.

Here we present key premises to ensure PEWS is used and interpreted safely to prevent child clinical deterioration.

**Paediatric EARLY Warning System**

- Any score is an abnormal score
- Improved situation awareness
- Earlier opportunity to rescue

**Use clinical judgement**

- Treat the child, not the score
- Monitor trends in vital signs and PEWS scoring

**Engage with the child and family**

- Parents/carers know their child best
- Use Listening to You resources
- Ask about concern

**Variance Use**

- Engage with the child and family
- Document all decisions clearly
- Escalate concerns quickly
- Monitor closely for safe use

**Escalation Pathway**

- Clinical judgement + PEWS score
- Escalation higher or lower as required
- Seek senior colleague advice
- Record decisions

More information: [www.hse.ie/pews](http://www.hse.ie/pews)