



دائرة الصحة  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

# DOH GUIDELINE FOR SAFE TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN AT HOSPITAL DISCHARGE

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# DOH GUIDELINES FOR SAFE TRANSPORTATION OF CHILDREN AT HOSPITAL DISCHARGE

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

**Child Car Safety Seat:** A special seat for a baby or a small child that can be attached to an automobile/car seat and that holds the child safely.

**Child Passenger Safety (CPS)/ Child Restraint System (CRS):** Devices used to protect and restrain infant and child automotive passengers.

**Certified Child Passenger Technician (CPST):** A Technician who completed four days of Safe kids training

**Law:** UAE amended Federal Traffic Law No. (178) of 2017

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Injuries are the second leading cause of death as per the overall death rate reported in Abu Dhabi. Among children 0-17 years old, injuries are the third leading cause of death. One in six children's deaths (14.1%) are due to preventable injuries. According to DOH's fatal injury statistics 2008-2015, the leading cause of fatal childhood injuries and disability among children in Abu Dhabi is road traffic injuries (64%), whether as a passenger in a car, as pedestrians or cyclists.

The protection and safety of children (0-17 years old) is one of the many priorities of the UAE government. The UAE amended Federal Traffic Law No. (178) of 2017 came into effect on July 2017 introducing the mandatory use of child car safety seats for children below the age of four. Based on these new federal regulations, DOH developed the following guidelines to provide further guidance and specifications for protecting newborns and children at hospital discharge.

This guideline document has been developed in accordance with international best practice as published by the American Academy of Pediatrics Journal in the recommendations of the safe transportation of newborns at Hospital Discharge<sup>1</sup>.

## 2. PURPOSE OF GUIDELINE

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist all hospitals in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi to implement the amended Federal Traffic Law No. (178) of 2017 in ensuring the safe transportation of newborns and children at hospital discharge. To this end, the guidelines encourage a set of actions to be carried out by Healthcare Providers and parents as well as vehicle safety requirements, which meet the specific transportation needs of healthy newborns, premature infants or any other hospitalized children under the age of four.

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<sup>1</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Injury and Poison Prevention Pediatrics 1999;104:986 Safe Transportation of Newborns at Hospital Discharge



### 3. SCOPE OF GUIDELINES

These Guidelines apply to all hospitals in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, when discharging newborns and all children under the age of four (as per the Law).

### 4. GUIDELINES

Hospitals can develop policies for the safe transportation of newborns and children under the age of four at discharge in consultation with a child car safety seat expert who has successfully completed a four-day Safe Kids certification course arranged by DOH or equivalent (e.g. U.S. National CPS Certification) or in consultation with a DOH expert. These policies can address the following elements:

#### 4.1. Designated Team and Responsible Person

- 4.1.1. The policy can designate a team specifically trained to assess the needs of newborn infants and infants with special health care needs with regards to the selection of the most appropriate child safety seat. The policy can also designate an individual responsible for implementing these policies and procedures.
- 4.1.2. The policy can address the provision of a period of observation in a car safety seat before hospital discharge for each infant born at <37 weeks' gestation to monitor for possible apnea, bradycardia, or oxygen desaturation inside the hospital.<sup>2345</sup>

#### 4.2. Car Safety

- 4.2.1. The policy can contain provisions to help determine the most appropriate car safety seat for each newborn according to maturity and medical condition by a designated knowledgeable trained hospital employee.
- 4.2.2. The policy can contain provisions to make available an appropriate car safety seat by sale, short-term loan, or donation to parents before discharge if the parents are unable to provide their own. The car seat should be crash tested and meet local Federal Safety Standard or certified by local standards authorities.

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<sup>2</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Injury and Poison Prevention and Committee on Fetus and Newborn. Safe transportation of premature and low birth weight infants. *Pediatrics*. 1996;97:758–760

<sup>3</sup> Safe Transportation of Preterm and Low Birth Weight Infants at Hospital Discharge” American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Injury, Violence, and Poison Prevention and the Committee on Fetus and Newborn. *Pediatrics*. Vol. 123(5): 1424-1429.

<sup>4</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Injury and Poison Prevention. Selecting and using the most appropriate car safety seats for growing children: guidelines for counseling parents. *Pediatrics*. 1996; 97:761–763

<sup>5</sup> American Academy of Pediatrics, Committee on Injury and Poison Prevention. Transporting children with special health care needs. 1999; 104:988–992



### 4.3. Parents Education

- 4.3.1. The policy can specify the responsibilities of CPS Technicians/hospital staff in providing education regarding best safety practices.
- 4.3.2. The policy can address how parents will be informed of the importance of using car seats, the risks with not doing so and potential problems with vehicle incompatibility.
- 4.3.3. Parents can be advised through prenatal classes, on how to obtain a car safety seat, how to properly secure it in their vehicle, and resolve compatibility issues before delivery.
- 4.3.4. The policy can address how hospitals plan to run education initiatives that teach parents how to pick the appropriate car seat and properly secure the car seat in their vehicle, to prevent any risks to the infant. Education initiatives can include both theory and practice.
- 4.3.5. The policy can address how all-educational material distributed to parents and guardians of newborns about proper car safety seat use will be periodically reviewed and updated. Hospital CPS Technicians/Staff could conduct a documented competency for parents on the installation of the seat into the car and the child into the seat, prior to discharge.
- 4.3.6. The Policy could include a mechanism for managing and documenting refusal of the parents to provide the legally required car seat/child protection and obtain a discharge against medical advice waiver from the child's parents.

### 4.4. Quality Assurance and Compliance

- 4.4.1. The policy can address how hospitals will assess the degree of staff compliance with the policy in routine quality assurance surveillance.