

Fabricated or Induced Illness

5 Minute Facts

What is it?

Fabricated or Induced Illness (FII) is a condition whereby a child, young person (or an adult) suffers harm through the deliberate action of her/his main carer and which is attributed by the adult to another cause. It is a relatively rare but potentially lethal form of abuse.

The main ways in which the parent/carer might fabricate or induce illness include:-

- A carer reporting symptoms and observed signs that are not explained by any known medical condition
- A carer reporting to professionals that a diagnosis has been made by another professional when this is not true, and giving conflicting information to different professionals
- Missed appointments especially if the appointments are not leading in the desired direction for the carer
- Physical examination and results of investigations that do not explain symptoms or signs reported by the carer
- The child having an inexplicably poor response to prescribed medication or other treatment, or intolerance of treatment
- The carer seeking multiple opinions inappropriately

What should you do?

Where there are clear indicators of FII in a child, a referral must be made to Children's Social Care.

From the point of the referral, all professionals involved with the child should work together as follows:

- Lead responsibility for action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare lies with Children's Social Care
- Any suspected case of FII may involve the commission of a crime and therefore the police should always be involved
- The paediatric consultant is the lead health professional and therefore has lead responsibility for all decisions pertaining to the child's health care

In cases of suspected FII, discussing concerns with parents or carers prior to making a referral may place the child at increased risk of Significant Harm. It is in the child's interests that the parents/carers are not informed of the referral at this stage. The multi-agency decision of when and how parents/carers will be informed of concerns will be made at a later stage.

Key contacts and for more information...

Integrated Front Door (IFD) Tel: 01204 331500

Emergency Duty Team Tel: 01204 337777

[Bolton Safeguarding Children Board procedure](#)

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www.mylifeinbolton.org.uk

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