

# SCN Clinical Learning

## Fitness to Fly

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# Case

- Child with complex needs planning holiday
  - Had actually been to Dubai earlier in the year
- Arrived / turned away from airport as airline 'fitness to fly' not completed
  - Given 2 days to complete form
- Tried to contact community paed
  - not had appropriate training
  - Not covered for indemnity
- GP asked to complete
  - Too complex
- Offered to complete but by then Emirates had withdrawn tickets

# Indemnity - MPS

- [Fit to fly \(medicalprotection.org\)](http://medicalprotection.org)
- Clinicians should work within their competence (? GP with child with complex needs)
- Seek help from experts e.g. surgeons after surgery
- Advise patients to check with their travel insurance companies
- Airlines may ask – confirmation of stability and if “fit to fly”.
- **consider the wording of statements carefully**, and where possible **offer factual information** about a patient’s condition, the **stability of it and presence or absence of recent deterioration**.
- If asked to comment on fitness to fly, **avoid stating a patient is “fit to fly” as the latter could be perceived as a guarantee of a patient’s fitness**.
- Word carefully e.g. **“this patient’s condition appears to be stable” or “I know of no reason why this patient shouldn’t be fit to fly”**.

# UK Civil Aviation Authority

- [Assessing fitness to fly | Civil Aviation Authority \(caa.co.uk\)](https://www.caa.co.uk)
- The **final decision whether or not to carry a passenger is that of the airline**, but the more information that is provided in advance, the more likely it is that a reasonable, evidence based decision can be made.
- **Most airlines have medical advisors** who provide advice and “clear” passengers as fit to fly.
- The key information that they require is:
  - the nature of the individual’s condition and its severity/stability,
  - medication being taken, and
  - any pertinent information about mobility.

# Assessment (Safeguarding)

- [Safeguarding Children with Complex Medical Needs who Travel Outside of the Local Authority or Abroad | Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership \(leadsscp.org.uk\)](https://www.leadsscp.org.uk)
- Is it safe and has appropriate thought / planning occurred
- Guidance specifically for Children with Complex Needs
- Leeds based but very helpful
  - Is it safe and has appropriate thought / planning occurred
  - Safeguarding but also help plan / fitness to fly info
- If risk identified – plan to mitigate / if no plans refer to social services

# Leeds safeguarding assessment

- Discuss with family and key practitioners – document this
- Risk Assessment includes consideration of:
  - Length of time out of area / the country
  - Area / country that is to be visited and availability of appropriate health care services should they be required
  - Preparation by the family in relation to the journey, detailing:
    - their understanding of how to access health care
    - need for health insurance
    - equipment / medication needed for the duration of the journey
    - any additional feeding supplies
  - Mode of transport and how the child is going to be managed during the journey
  - Prior arrangement with the local health care in their destination
  - Families understanding of risk and views

Any experience from others?