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Community Paediatrics

**Global Developmental Delay (GDD)**

Information for Parents / Carers

**What is Global Developmental Delay (GDD)?**

GDD is diagnosed when a child is not meeting some of the expected developmental milestones for their age in two or more areas of their development.

Developmental milestones are different skills that a child usually achieves by a certain age

The four broad areas of development are

- physical abilities such as crawling, walking, and running (gross motor)

- use of their hands (fine motor)

- ability to understand and express themselves (communication)

- Play and interaction with others (social skills)

**How do we assess for GDD?**

The majority of our assessment is done by observing your child play and getting more information about his/her development from you as their parents or carers.

The doctor will ask you some questions about pregnancy, delivery, early childhood, family history

The doctor will also examine your child as part of this assessment

**What causes GDD?**

Some risk factors for GDD are complications during pregnancy, being born early (premature), severe infections (like meningitis), a family history of developmental delays / learning difficulties and some genetic conditions. In some children a cause cannot be found.

**What tests will my child have?**

The doctor may offer some tests for your child based on their assessment in clinic .

The tests help to understand the medical reason for your child’s developmental problems

The tests vary depending on each child’s assessment ; they may include: blood tests, urine tests and scans Some children may be referred to have hearing and vision tests

Genetic blood tests may also be offered . Your doctor will speak to you about this in more detail, and there are separate information leaflets available about this.

Our specialist learning disability nurses can support if blood taking is distressing for your child.

**What does this mean for my child?**

Your child may need additional support to help them reach their full potential.

The doctor may make referrals to other professionals to support your child’s development .

Your child may need support from other teams such as Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy (OT) or Speech and Language Therapy (SALT). Additional support may be needed at nursery or school .

Children with more significant global delay are at risk of developing learning disabilities as they grow older. It is difficult to predict the full extent of these needs at a young age, but we know that early support can make a difference. If your child's developmental delay is severe, please discuss with the nursery or school SENCO regarding an educational needs assessment

If you have any questions , please contact your child’s medical team or health visitor.

**Helpful resources:**

 Liverpool City Council Early Help Directory:

<https://fisd.liverpool.gov.uk/kb5/liverpool/fsd/home.page>

Knowsley and Sefton Council Directory: <https://www.seftondirectory.com/kb5/sefton/directory/a_to_z.page?nh=100&titleletter=t>

Liverpool family information – children’s centres:

<https://fsd.liverpool.gov.uk/kb5/liverpool/fsd/family.page?familychannel=3>

Early years developmental journey:

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/files/NO9%2520-%2520early_years_developmental_journal2013_0.pdf>

Alder Hey Community speech and language therapy:

<https://alderhey.nhs.uk/services/speech-and-language-therapy/speech-and-language-therapy-liverpool>

Alder Hey community physiotherapy:

<https://alderhey.nhs.uk/services/physiotherapy>

Mencap Charity:

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/learning-disability-explained/conditions/global-development-delay>



This leaflet only gives general information. You must always discuss the individual treatment of your child with the appropriate member of staff. Do not rely on this leaflet alone for information about your child’s treatment.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats if requested.

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