

Child Protection Policy

Updated June 2026

At Queenstown Medical Centre, we are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. We recognise that protecting children is a shared responsibility, and we take all concerns about a child's safety seriously.

Our Commitment

We are committed to:

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people
- Recognising and responding to concerns about a child's wellbeing
- Supporting families/whānau wherever possible
- Working alongside other agencies when needed to protect children
- The **safety and wellbeing of the child is always our first priority.**

How We Support Child Safety

Our team is trained to:

- Recognise signs that a child may need help or support
- Respond appropriately to concerns about abuse or neglect
- Take action when needed to ensure a child is safe
- All staff receive child protection training and ongoing support so they can respond safely and confidently.

Recognising Concerns

Sometimes children may need additional support. This could include:

- Changes in behaviour or emotional wellbeing
- Signs of neglect (such as lack of food, clothing, or care)
- Signs of physical harm or injury
- Concerns raised by the child, family/whānau, or others
- Every situation is different. Our team considers all available information before taking action and focuses on the overall wellbeing of the child.

What Happens if We Are Concerned

If we are concerned about a child's safety or wellbeing, we will:

- Speak with appropriate senior staff within our practice
- Seek advice from child protection services if needed
- Work with external agencies such as:
 - Oranga Tamariki (Child, Youth and Family services)
 - New Zealand Police
- We follow established national guidelines to ensure concerns are managed appropriately.
- In some situations, we may need to **share information without consent** if there is a serious risk to a child's safety. This is allowed under New Zealand law.

Working with Families and Whānau

We aim to:

- Work openly and respectfully with families/whānau
- Involve you in decisions wherever it is safe and appropriate
- Provide support and guidance where concerns are identified
- In some cases, we may need to take action without informing family/whānau first. This will only happen if advised by child protection agencies to ensure the child's safety.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

- We respect your privacy and handle information carefully.
- However, if we believe a child is at risk of harm, we may share relevant information with appropriate agencies to keep them safe. This is done:
 - In line with the Privacy Act and health information guidelines
 - Only when necessary to protect a child or young person

Safe Practice at QMC

- To support a safe environment:
- All staff are appropriately trained and safety-checked
- We follow strict professional boundaries when working with children
- Children are always cared for in safe, appropriate settings within our practice

Our Commitment to Continuous Improvement

We regularly review our child protection practices and work with other services in our community to ensure we are providing safe and effective care.

If You Have Concerns

If you are worried about a child's safety or wellbeing, we encourage you to:

- Speak with one of our team members, or
- Contact us directly for support
- We are here to help and will take all concerns seriously.