

# Child Protection Medicals – Is Sexual Abuse being Considered?

Paediatric Research Across The Midlands (PRAM) Network  
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## 1. Background

- Child sexual abuse affects 1 in 20 UK children.
- CSA is more common in physically abused children.
- It is important for clinicians to recognise indicators of CSA

## 2. Aims

- Are RCPCH standards for child protection medicals being met?
- Are the indicators of CSA recorded?

## 3. Methods

- Data collected prospectively from 8 Trusts included in the West Midlands
- All children (0-16) referred for a child protection medical examination over a 4 week period
- Data items included: demographics, CSA disclosures, indicators of CSA, Genitalia examination
- Children in whom CSA was the presenting concern excluded

## 4. Results

- 91 children included, median age 5 years, range 2 weeks to 15 years (Figure 2).
- Indicators of CSA were recorded infrequently (Figure 4): recurrent genital/anal symptoms in 26%, faecal incontinence in 36%, urinary incontinence in 42% and behavioural change in 46%. Examination of genital and anal area was performed in 59% and 49% (Figure 3).
- Indicators of CSA were more likely to be recorded if the examination was performed in a community setting (genital/anal symptoms  $p=0.002$ , faecal incontinence  $p=0.003$ , urinary incontinence  $p=0.003$ ).
- Abnormal behaviours more likely to be asked about by consultant grades ( $p=0.006$ ).
- Forty three percent of verbal children were spoken to alone.

Figure 1. Gender of included patients

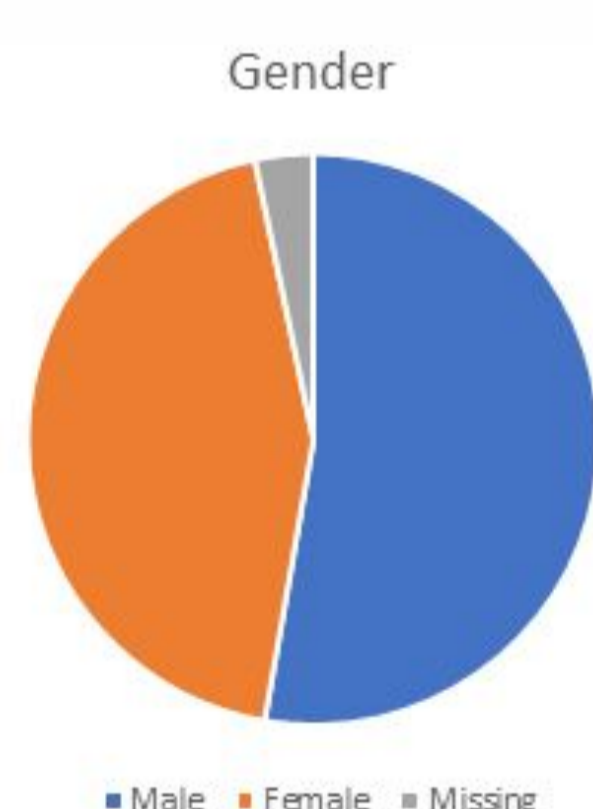


Figure 2. Age of included patients

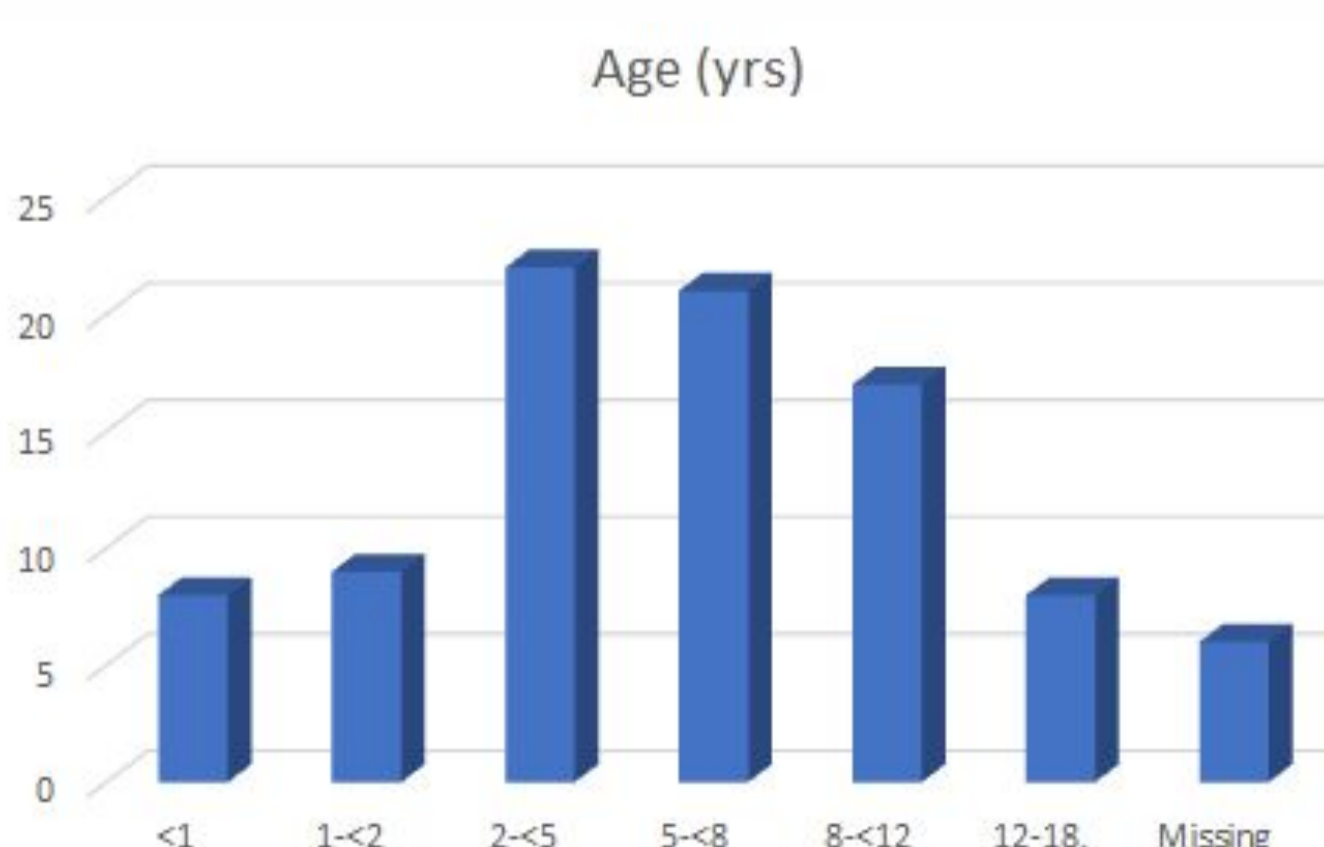


Figure 3. Areas examined as part of medical examination

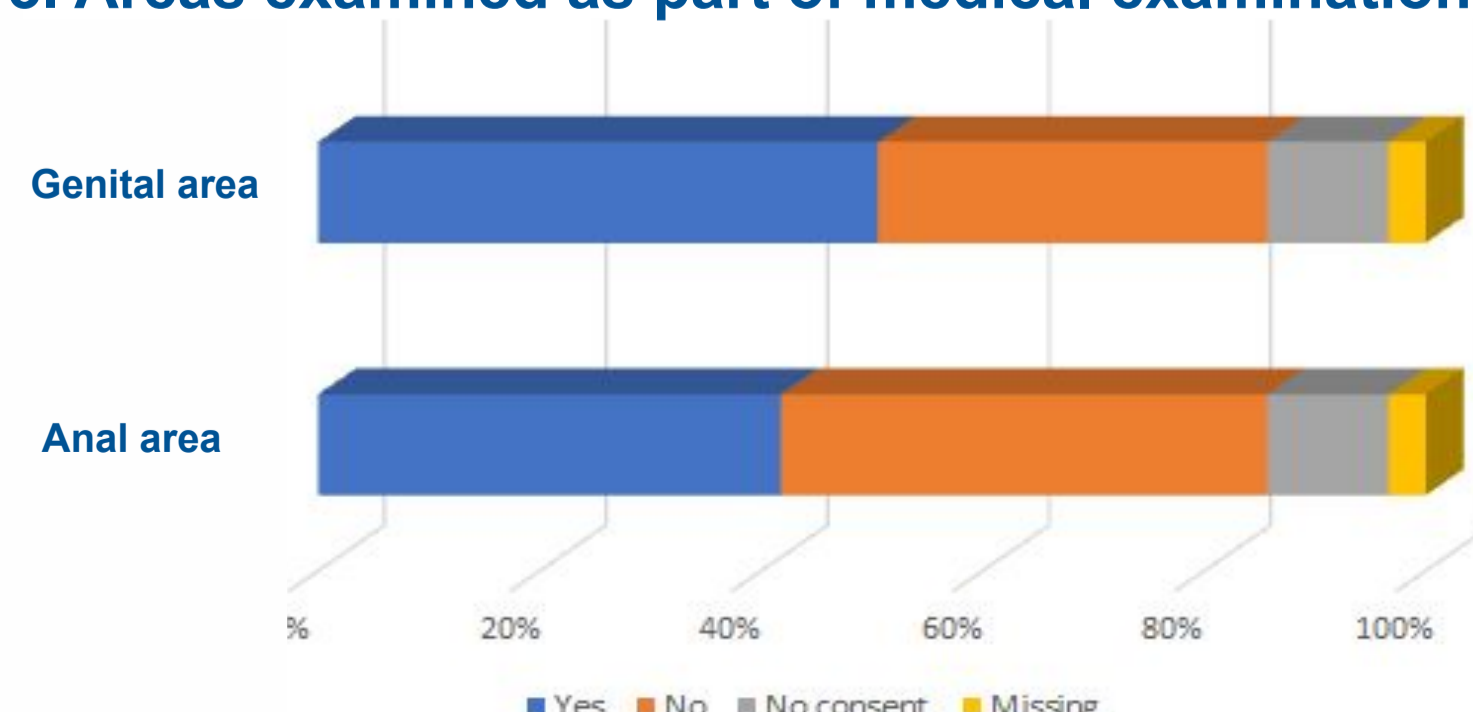


Figure 4. Percentage of children asked about each symptom

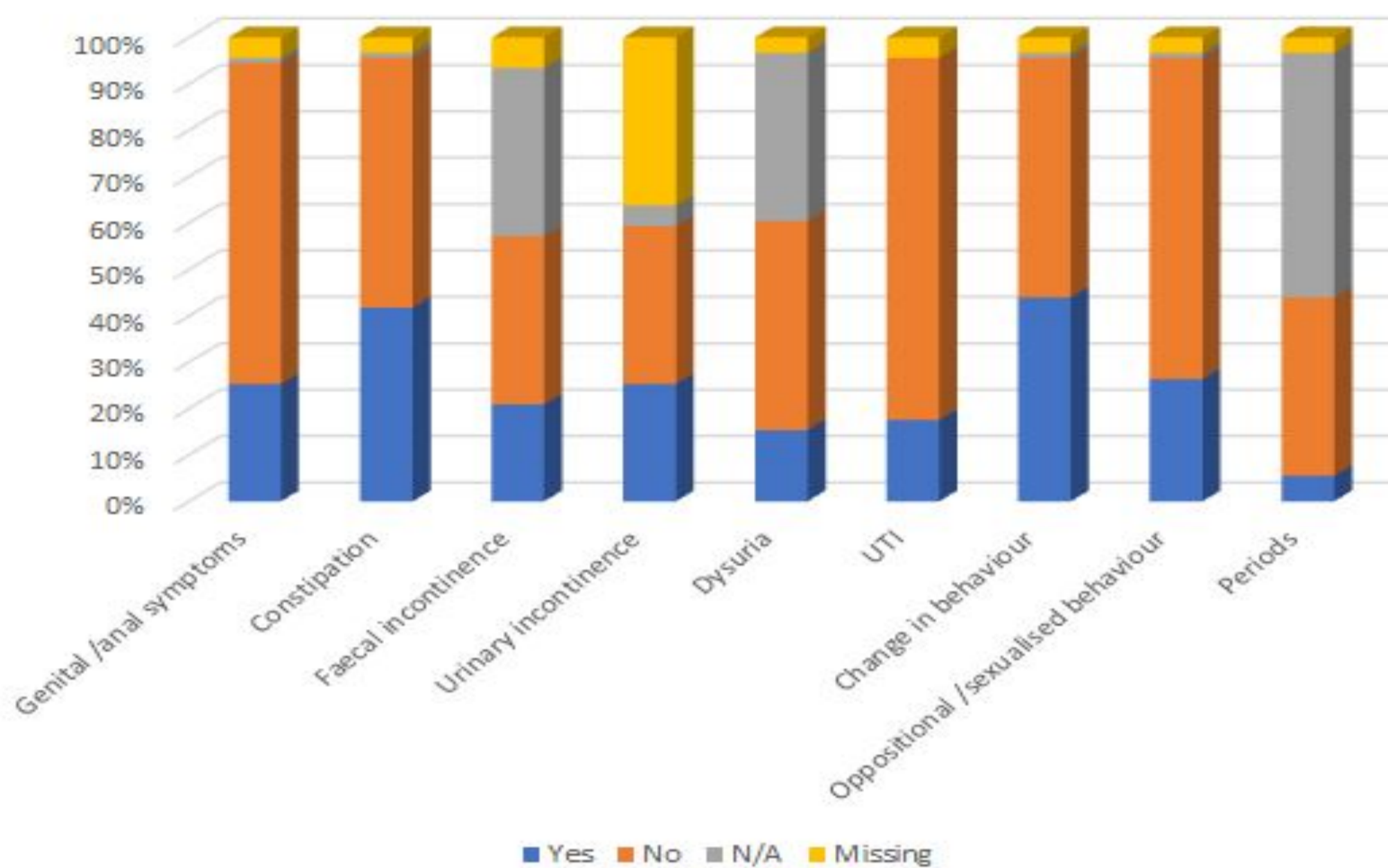


Table 4. Logistic regression of variables affecting whether symptoms enquired about

	Variable	Odds ratio	P Value	95% CI
Genital and anal symptoms enquired about	Age of child	1.00	0.695	0.99-1.01
	Gender of child	2.04	0.205	0.68-6.16
	Grade of examiner	2.53	0.168	0.68-9.49
	Location of examination	6.58	0.002	2.05-21.13
Faecal incontinence enquired about	Age of child	1.00	0.703	0.98-1.02
	Gender of child	3.80	0.065	0.92-15.69
	Grade of examiner	0.35	0.209	0.07-1.81
	Location of examination	9.93	0.003	2.22-44.4
Urinary incontinence enquired about	Age of child	0.99	0.356	0.97-1.01
	Gender of child	1.59	0.482	0.43-5.84
	Grade of examiner	0.39	0.238	0.08-1.86
	Location of examination	7.54	0.003	2.03-28.03
Abnormal behaviours enquired about	Age of child	1.01	0.060	1.00-1.02
	Gender of child	1.88	0.275	0.61-5.83
	Grade of examiner	6.57	0.006	1.74-24.87
	Location of examination	2.93	0.057	0.97-8.88

## 5. Conclusion

- CSA indicators considered in some children; not all.
- The majority of verbal children were not spoken to alone.

## 6. Discussion

- Recommendation - single question on the child protection pro-forma: "Have you considered Child Sexual Abuse?"

## References

- [1] National Institute for Health and Care Excellence *Child maltreatment: when to suspect maltreatment in under 18s*; Clinical guideline [CG89] Published date: July 2009 Last updated: October 2017  
[2] RCPCH Child Protection Companion 2e 2013 Lavenham Press

Competing interests: None