Children and young people have rights to be supported in their health and wellbeing. These rights are articulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), to which the UK Government is a signatory.

While the articles in the UNCRC are not enforceable in their own right in relation to specific services, the UK’s ratification of the Convention commits Government to realise them through domestic legislation and policies.

This summary presents the key messages from this domestic framework, and is based on work carried out by the National Children’s Bureau (NCB) and the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) following research with children and young people about the NHS Constitution. For more information, you can access the full NCB/CDC reports and the source documents listed below.

**What are the rights, pledges and commitments for children and young people when using the NHS in England?**

This summary presents the key rights, pledges and commitments to children and young people in four key documents. It is arranged in the form of a set of statements organised under eight themes. For each statement we have constructed, we indicate which documents it draws on:

- **C** NHS Constitution (normally underpinned by regulation or legislation)
- **C-Pledge** A ‘pledge’ made in the NHS Constitution (not underpinned by regulation)
- **YW** You’re Welcome quality criteria
- **M** Children and Young People’s Manifesto for Health and Wellbeing
- **P** Better health outcomes for children and young people ‘Pledge’

It is not an exhaustive nor technical list, rather a broad summary of what the current aspirations of national partners are for what children, young people and their families should be able to expect when using the NHS.
What should children and young people expect?

Access and Availability: How can I use the services I need?

Decisions about commissioning should be based on assessment of children and young people’s needs

Children and young people are provided with information on how to access services

Children and young people have timely access to services

Service settings and their location provide for independent and non-stigmatising access for children and young people

There is provision to ensure access to services for children with complex needs or access challenges

Children and young people will not be turned away from services unreasonably

Clinical Quality: Will it work, is it safe?

Staff have appropriate training in the care of children and young people

Children and young people are provided with treatment that is based on clinical need, age appropriate and follows any relevant NICE recommendations

Treatment and settings are safe

Settings are designed with children and young people’s comfort in mind

Children and young people will have the option of being treated in age appropriate accommodation

Pain is managed appropriately

Assessment and care planning considers the needs of the whole child
Wellbeing and Prevention: Help me stay healthy
Children and young people’s contact with health services is used as an opportunity to promote wellbeing and healthy lifestyles

Children and young people and their families can access information and advice to help them make healthy choices

Schools and health services work together to support children and young people's wellbeing

Children and young people's emotional and mental health needs are met

Prevention and tackling health inequalities is prioritised

Communication, Confidentiality, Respect: How am I treated by staff?
Professionals will communicate with children and young people in an appropriate way that values them and ensures they understand what is being communicated

All information should be provided in a way that can be clearly understood by children and young people to help them take part in decision making

Children and young people’s privacy and confidentiality is taken seriously by professionals and services

Children and young people have control over information

Children and young people are treated with dignity and respect

Individual involvement and consent: Having a say in my care and treatment
Children and young people are supported to take part in decisions about their own care and support

Children and young people will be able to give to informed consent to their treatment
Children and young people will be provided with appropriate information to make informed decisions about treatment and consent

Children and young people are able to make choices about the services commissioned by the NHS

**Collective Involvement: Getting involved in my area to make things better**

Children and young people are involved in the routine planning of health services

Children and young people are consulted on any proposed changes to services

Children and young people are given the information and support they need to influence and scrutinise the planning and delivery of services

Children and young people are involved in evaluation of services

Children and Young People are included in patient surveys

There are effective provider-level feedback mechanisms

Lessons from the views and experiences of children and young people collected in the past are shared, built on and acted on

**Integration and Transition: Everyone working together around me**

Children and young people will experience integrated care

Services will work together to make the transition in and out of services, and between different as smooth as possible

Children and young people will be supported in making the transition from children’s to adult services

Children and young people looked after by the local authority will receive specific support to manage the transition between services
Complaints: What do I do if I’m not happy with the NHS?

Children and young people and their families have the information and support they need to make complaints and are kept informed throughout the process.

If a child or young person or their family makes a complaint they are treated with respect.

There are mechanisms to complain or appeal to a third party.

An appropriate response to the complaint is received.

The Children and Young People’s Health Outcomes Forum was established by Ministers in January 2012 as an independent expert advisory group of professionals and representatives from across the children’s sector. The Forum provides expertise, constructive challenge and evidence based advice to improve children and young people’s health outcomes and healthcare and to drive up standards of care.

The Forum’s Culture, Engagement and Voice Theme Group asked the NCB and CDC to produce this summary for publication in March 2015 with the Forum’s second Annual Report.