

Governance Paper: Triage Toolkit for Children's Cancer Services 3rd Edition (2026)

Project: Triage Toolkit for Children's Cancer Services (Version 3.0, 2026)

Purpose: This paper provides the governance framework for local approval and implementation of the Triage Toolkit (TT) Version 3.0 (previously The Telephone Triage Toolkit for Children's Cancer Services V2.0 2020). It outlines the evidence base, risks, mitigations, audit requirements, and training standards to ensure safe and consistent triage practice.

1. Background

The TT was developed to standardise telephone and face-to-face triage for children and young people receiving systemic anticancer therapy or other treatments. Version 3.0 aligns with the UKONS and UK Acute Oncology Society adult 24 Hour Triage Tool review (V 3, 2025) and introduces ABCDE-first assessment, updated toxicity prompts, immunotherapy and targeted therapy considerations, and refreshed training and audit tools.

2. Governance Requirements

- Approval by Trust Clinical Governance Committee or equivalent body prior to implementation. Remove Version 2 2020 and replace with updated Version 3 2026.
- Integration with local admission pathways and escalation protocols.
- Identification of responsible practitioners for triage, per duty/shift, with clear handover processes.
- Compliance with organisational policies for documentation and record keeping.

3. Evidence Base

- The CCLG Triage Tool Kit Version 3 2026, is based on NCRI-CTCAE toxicity criteria for robust symptom grading.
- Positive evaluation since 2016: widely used across UK PTCs, systematic approach, improved safety, no serious incidents attributed to tool kit use when used correctly.
- **Two incidents have been identified to date.** These were reviewed by NHS England Patient Safety (Children & Young People) and Human Factors teams following reports submitted via the Learn from Patient Safety Events (LFPSE),

National Reporting and Learning System (NRLS), and STEIS over a three-year period. One incident occurred in 2023 and one in 2025.

- In both cases, the incidents were associated with deviation from correct use of the telephone triage tool. Specifically, the required escalation was not followed when a child scored two amber indicators, resulting in the child not being reviewed in hospital as intended.
- A full root cause analysis was not shared; therefore, the underlying reasons for non-adherence to the tool are not known. However, the findings support that correct application of the tool, as designed, would likely have reduced risk.
- In response, training materials and resources have been enhanced to provide greater emphasis and clarity on correct tool use and escalation requirements.
- Supports national consistency across Principal Treatment Centres for childhood cancer and Paediatric Oncology Shared Care Units.

4. Risks and Mitigations

Risk	Impact	Proposed Mitigation
Delayed local approval of version 3 2026	Late adoption	Provide template governance paper and easy access to all Triage Toolkit materials via CCLG Website Telephone Triage Tool Kit CCLG - The Children & Young People's Cancer Association .
Training gaps	Unsafe triage practice	Mandatory training for staff new to triage. Updates for existing trained staff and competency assessment updates during implementation.
Version confusion	Use of outdated tools	Single source of truth on Telephone Triage Tool Kit CCLG - The Children & Young People's Cancer Association ; deprecate old versions.
Incomplete log sheet review = inadequate audit	Safety risk; audit gaps	Local policy for use of triage toolkit; recommend monthly audits using provided audit tool or local equivalent; reporting into local governance systems.

5. Audit and Log-Sheet Policy

- Log sheet must be completed for all triage interactions (telephone or face-to-face).
- Review of log sheets within 24 hours by designated responsible practitioner.
- Monthly audit of log sheets; results discussed in team meetings.
- Adoption of CCLG audit tool or equivalent local audit process.

6. Training and Competency Requirements

- All staff using the toolkit must complete training and competency assessment before providing triage advice.
- Training includes: reading the Toolkit Manual and competency assessment document, locally delivered training using the CCLG training presentation and learning scenarios, scenario practice, observed clinical practice, and competency sign-off. This can be supplemented with completing UKONS eLearning modules (2 of the 4 modules apply to all age groups and are signposted from the training manual.)
- Annual reassessment of competency required; certificate available in manual.

7. Approval Checklist

- Toolkit manual reviewed and accessible to staff.
- Governance approval obtained and documented.
- Training completed for all practitioners providing triage advice.
- Log-sheet review process agreed and implemented.
- Audit schedule established and communicated.