Box 1: Priority services
- General Practice
- Sexual Health Services
- Sexual Assault Services
- Looked after children (LAC) teams
- Learning Disability Services
- Paediatric Services
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Midwifery
- Health visiting
- School health Nursing
- Advice and counselling services
- Accident and Emergency Services
- Welsh Ambulance Services
- Pharmacists

Box 2: Priority children and young people
- Looked after children
- Children with sexually transmitted infection
- Children who are pregnant
- Children with poor school attendance
- Children who self-harm/have suicidal thoughts
- Children who abuse alcohol/substances
- Children with behavioural issues
- Children with physical/learning difficulties
- Also, children seen for pregnancy testing, contraceptive advice/treatment (including emergency contraception)
- Domestic violence in home

Box 3: Limits of confidentiality
Explain that if child discloses something that raises concern for their safety or that of other children you have a duty to act.

Box 4: Disclosure statement
Explain your concerns to the child and seek permission to share information. “I need to share my concerns with colleagues (e.g. in Children’s Services) who are in a position to help and support you.” Remember that the safety of the child is paramount and if consent is refused you MUST still act.

Box 5: Uncertain what action to take?
Discuss your concerns with an appropriate person according to your child protection protocol. This may be your manager, child protection lead or duty social worker. Include responses to CSERQ in your child protection referral.

GUIDANCE ON COMPLETION OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION RISK QUESTIONNAIRE (CSERQ15)

CSE risk assessment requires a child-centred approach which considers the holistic needs of the child. The CSERQ15 checklist is intended to help health practitioners in assessing a child’s risk and to support their professional judgement on deciding when to make a child protection referral (see box 1 for priority services).

ANY child (10-17 year olds) from ANY background can be at risk of sexual exploitation. Box 2 lists those considered most vulnerable.

Be mindful not to make assumptions.

Explain limits of confidentiality (See box 3)

Introduce the questions
“I would like to ask you some questions to check that you are safe and no one is harming you or pressuring you to have sex.”

Complete CSERQ15 checklist
Every child is unique. With over 100 potential risk indicators for CSE in common use, you may need to consider other risk indicators and protective factors.

Use professional judgement
If you have other concerns for health, safety or welfare of a child you MUST refer.

CSERQ4: 1 or more positive responses
CSERQ15: 5 or more positive responses
suggests a significant risk of CSE. You MUST take action.
However, if you have other concerns, you may decide to refer at a lower threshold.

Explain need to share information and seek consent (see box 4)

Make child protection referral. If uncertain what action to take see box 5. Document your findings and action taken.
All health professionals are encouraged to complete the CSERQ15 checklist. However, it is recognised that some professionals with very limited experience of asking the questions, or in services where there are significant time constraints, it may be more appropriate to complete the CSERQ4 questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSERQ checklist</th>
<th>Y/N</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> Have you ever stayed out overnight or longer without permission from your parent(s) or guardian? <em>(Going missing)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> How old is your partner or the person(s) you have sex with? Age of partner __________ Age of client/patient __________ Age difference __________</td>
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<td>If age difference is 4 or more years* then tick ‘YES’. N.B. For 17 year olds, in the absence of any other risk indicators, an age difference of up to 6 years may be acceptable. <em>(Older partner)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> Does your partner stop you from doing things you want to do? <em>(Controlling relationship)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong> Thinking about where you go to hang out, or to have sex. Do you feel unsafe there or are your parent(s) or guardian worried about your safety? <em>(Frequenting areas known for sexual exploitation)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.</strong> Do you live with someone other than your parent or guardian?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6.</strong> Does your parent/guardian or the person you live with have drug, alcohol and/or mental health problem?</td>
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<td><strong>7.</strong> Are you unable to, or not allowed to, go out with friends your own age?</td>
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<td><strong>8.</strong> Do you lack confidence or feel bad about yourself?</td>
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<td><strong>9.</strong> Have you ever felt the need to hurt yourself on purpose or to starve yourself to make you feel better in yourself?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10.</strong> Do you drink alcohol to get drunk?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>11.</strong> Do you see anyone for counselling or have extra support with your school work?</td>
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<td><strong>12.</strong> Have you ever been excluded from school or stayed off school without permission?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>13.</strong> Does anyone physically or sexually hurt you or make you feel unsafe?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>14.</strong> Have you ever had a relationship with someone you met on the internet?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>15.</strong> Males: Have you ever had a sexually transmitted infection? Females: Have you ever had a sexually transmitted infection, pregnancy or had a termination of pregnancy?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**ACTION:** There is good correlation between high risk of CSE and a) five or more positive responses to CSERQ15, or b) one or more positive responses if the CSERQ4 is used. Therefore, if either of these thresholds is met you MUST take action.

**HOWEVER:** each child is unique and their circumstances will be different. New risk indicators are regularly identified. A holistic approach to CSE risk must be taken. It is absolutely acceptable to decide to refer at a lower threshold *(e.g. when CSERQ4 is negative or fewer than five of the remaining CSERQ5-15 questions are positive)* especially if you have other concerns for the health, safety or welfare of the child or other siblings.

**References**

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**Authors:** CSE Strategy/Plan Implementation Group