

Name of applicant

DoB

Health report on prospective applicant for fostering / adoption / intercountry adoption / special guardianship / short break / respite care / kinship care / other care

To be completed by the applicant and their GP

CONFIDENTIAL

Guidelines for completing Form AH

This 2007 revised Form AH, Adult Health Report, has been redesigned to reflect developments in practice and to clarify the purpose of the health report. Additional questions have been included regarding hepatitis and HIV. A commissioning letter from the agency should accompany this form.

Why is this information needed?

The requirements to collect information on prospective adoptive applicants and foster carers are laid down in the relevant adoption and fostering Regulations for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Many children who are in the care system (children looked after) have a history of neglect and/or physical, sexual or emotional abuse. Others may have come into care as a result of other family dysfunction or problems such as parental substance misuse or mental health problems. Looked after children may experience frequent moves and interrupted schooling. At the same time, many are coping with the effects of separation and loss whilst struggling to recover from the factors which led them into care in the first place. This vulnerable group of children has a higher incidence of developmental delay, incomplete immunisations and routine healthcare, attachment issues, poor school attendance and mental health problems.

Prospective adopters and carers will therefore need to have robust physical and mental health to be able to parent these vulnerable children. The information requested on Form AH is required in order to secure the future wellbeing of any child placed. Health information on prospective adopters or foster carers and its interpretation form only one part of the process and will be set alongside other information obtained by the agency in considering the suitability of applicants. Although it is unusual for health issues to prevent approval, the information provided is used to assist appropriate matching.

Special consideration may need to be given to health-related lifestyle factors which may have implications for a placement. It is important that agencies satisfy themselves that applicants are robust enough to meet the demands of parenting on a daily basis, and in the case of adoption and long-term placements have a reasonable expectation of retaining health and vigour to support children to adulthood. Age is relevant but more significant will be specific medical factors and health-related lifestyle factors such as smoking, alcohol consumption, gross obesity, diet and exercise. These need to be looked at alongside other positive attributes that applicants may have to offer to a child or children.

Who should complete the form?

Part A should be completed by **the agency** and the entire form given to the applicant.

Part B should be completed by **the applicant** and the entire form given to their GP.

Part C should be completed by **the applicant's own GP** and the entire form sent to the agency Medical Adviser.

Part B should be completed by **the applicant**. Applicants are asked to provide information about their health and lifestyle. This will be considered alongside medical information from the GP.

Part C should be **completed by the applicant's own GP**, unless special circumstances indicate that another doctor has better knowledge. The purpose of the completion of the medical report on the applicant is to obtain accurate and up-to-date information, based on medical examination and medical facts from records, on the applicant's individual and family health history and current physical and mental health. The applicant's GP is not required to make a decision on suitability but to provide sufficient accurate and detailed information to enable the agency Medical Adviser to advise the agency. This information will assist the agency in deciding the applicant's suitability to care for the child.

The agency Medical Adviser may be contacted if the doctor completing the form wishes to discuss any issues arising from the health assessment or report.

Name of applicant

DoB

PAGE 2

Interpretation of Adult Health Report by agency Medical Adviser

The agency Medical Adviser should take account of medical history, current health and health-related lifestyle factors and evaluate these carefully to provide advice to the agency on the implications of an applicant's health history. The impact of health conditions on activities of daily living may be more important than the condition itself.

The agency Medical Adviser should be well informed about the implications for adoption and fostering of a variety of factors including chronic conditions, treated cancer and psychiatric history. For adoptive applicants, current treatment for infertility, the implications of infertility and perinatal loss will need consideration, so full details including termination of pregnancy should be provided.

Assessing an applicant's mental health may involve consultation with an adult psychiatrist and close liaison with the social worker assessing the case who will have further information gained through the applicant and from interviews with referees. As with any health issue, this needs careful assessment and liaison with adult specialists and social workers for further information.

In the case of complex health issues, written permission should be obtained from the applicant for further information to be sought. Applicants should be reassured that information obtained will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and will be used only to inform the process of assessment of approval.

Confidentiality

Health reports form part of the applicant's case record and the relevant Regulations for each country in the UK provide for the agency to treat such case records as confidential.

The Medical Adviser's summary forms the basis from which medical information on prospective adopters and foster carers is to be included in the written assessment reports provided for adoption and fostering panels. Whilst the applicant gives permission for the agency to have information regarding their medical history and this can be shared within the agency on a need to know basis, this does not permit information about an applicant to be shared with their partner. The information regarding one applicant is confidential to that applicant and this confidentiality must be respected. In the event of the information provided indicating any concerns as to the applicant's suitability, the Medical Adviser should discuss these with the agency.

Medical reports and all information about prospective foster carers are subject to the Data Protection Act 1998, which grants people (including applicants) the right to see personal information held about them, under section 7. This Act does not apply in the case of applicants to adopt because adoption agency records are exempt from the provisions in section 7 about subject access, in terms of the Data Protection (Miscellaneous Subject Access Exemptions) Order 2000 and the Data Protection (Miscellaneous Subject Access Exemptions) (Amendment) Order 2000 (as further amended in 2005). (See BAAF Practice Note 47, *Using the BAAF Health Assessment Forms*.) However, good practice suggests the sharing of as much information as possible, including medical reports.

Specific issues

Further information on statute and guidance and specific health issues in fostering and adoption may be obtained at www.baaf.org.uk and from the following publications:

Department of Health (2002) *Promoting the Health of Looked After Children*, London: Department of Health

Lord J and Cullen D (2006) *Effective Panels: Guidance on regulations, process and good practice in adoption and permanence panels*, London: BAAF

Millar I with Fursland E (2006) *A Guide for Medical Advisers: Scotland*, London: BAAF

Mather M with Batty D and Payne H (2000) *Doctors for Children in Public Care*, London: BAAF

Welsh Assembly (2007) Draft Guidance (pending) *Looking after Health*

BAAF Practice Note 39 *Hepatitis and HIV: Issues related to substitute care, foster care, residential care and adoption*

BAAF Practice Note 46 *Health Screening of Children Adopted from Abroad*

BAAF Practice Note 47 *Using the BAAF Health Assessment Forms*

BAAF Practice Note 50 *Genetic Testing and Adoption*

BAAF Practice Note 51 *Reducing the Risk of Environmental Tobacco Smoke for Looked After Children and their Carers*

This form replaces Form AH revised 2001, which is discontinued.

Name of applicant	DoB
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PART A To be completed by the agency – write clearly in black ink

Health report on prospective application for (tick as appropriate)

Fostering	<input type="checkbox"/>	tick if long term	<input type="checkbox"/>	Short break/respite care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adoption	<input type="checkbox"/>			Intercountry adoption	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special guardianship	<input type="checkbox"/>			Kinship care	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other care	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Ages and number of children applied for (if specific child, provide details)

Name of agency	Social worker
Address	
	Postcode
Telephone	Fax
Email	
Case reference number	

Form to be returned to agency: Medical Adviser by GP

Name of Medical Adviser	
Address	
	Postcode
Telephone	Fax
Email	

PART B To be completed by the applicant

Family name of applicant	
Given name	Gender
Address	
	Postcode
Date of birth	Occupation
Ethnic descent	

Name of applicant	DoB
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1 Relationship history (if appropriate)

Duration of marriage/cohabitation/civil partnership

Any previous marriage/cohabitation/civil partnership (give duration)

2 CONSENT

I understand that the information about my medical history and present medical condition recorded on this form is required by the named agency and will be of great importance in decisions regarding the future placement of a child. I consent to a medical examination and to any further enquiry deemed necessary, and to the provision of this report to the agency. I understand that further enquiries from medical specialists may be needed, and that in future I may be asked to give specific consent to obtain further health information.

I understand that I am responsible for informing the agency if there are any significant changes to my health.

Signature of applicant

Date

3 Do you consider yourself to be in good health?

Yes/No

If no, please give details

Are you seeing any specialists or hospital consultants?

Yes/No

If yes i) Who is it?

Where?

ii) What do you see him/her for?

Have you had any fertility treatment?

Yes/No

If yes, give brief details and medical reasons, and date treatment ended

Are you taking any medication on a regular basis?

Yes/No

If yes, what are they?

Have you had any significant health problems in the past?

Yes/No

If yes, please give details

Name of applicant	DoB
--------------------------	------------

Have you had any emotional or mental health problems such as anxiety, depression or stress?
 Include any life events which may have been a trigger. Yes/No
If yes, please give details

Have you ever seen a psychiatrist/psychologist/psychotherapist/counsellor/psychiatric nurse/other health
 or social work professional or complementary therapist for issues related to mental health? Yes/No
If yes, please give details and dates

Have you ever attended a private health clinic or hospital? Yes/No
If yes, provide details and dates

Are you on any benefits related to sickness, incapacity or disability? Yes/No
If yes, please give details

4 Family history

Provide details about the health of your family. Does anyone have any serious health problems? Does anyone have any genetic conditions which may run in the family?

	Age	State of health if living (if known)	Age at death and cause (if known)
Father			
Mother			
Brothers and sisters			
Children			
Other			

Name of applicant	DoB
--------------------------	------------

5 Lifestyle

Describe your exercise Type How often and how long

Describe your diet and any dietary restrictions

Anything else important about your lifestyle

Do you or did you ever		Quantity – specify per day or week	Duration/details
Smoke tobacco	Yes / No		
Drink alcohol	Yes / No		
Use street/recreational drugs (give name)	Yes / No		
Inject street/recreational drugs (give name)	Yes / No		

I certify that to the best of my knowledge the above information is complete and accurate.

Signature of applicant

Date

PART C To be completed by the applicant's GP

Please review the information provided by the applicant in Part B and complete the following sections 1 to 11.

Examining doctor acknowledgement

I have reviewed the information in Part B with the applicant

Comments/Recommendations

Signature of GP

Date

Name of applicant

DoB

PAGE 7

1 General

Are you the applicant's usual GP? Completion by the usual GP is highly recommended. If not, explain current role.

How long have you been his/her doctor?

At what date do his/her records (please consider written and computerised records) begin? Do the records appear to be continuous? If not, please provide details of any breaks.

When and for what purpose did he/she last consult your practice?

Is he/she currently receiving/being prescribed any medication or other treatment?
If yes, please specify

2 Medical history

Is there any history (medical, surgical or traumatic) referable to the following systems? Please give details (including treatment, dates and duration) or write NONE

Cardiovascular system

Respiratory system (including nose and throat)

Digestive system

Urogenital system and details of any sexual health issues (for females include details of any pregnancies or terminations)

Is any family limitation due to contraception, sterilisation, failure to conceive or other cause?

If 'failure to conceive', give duration and reason. Please specify investigations and treatments

Nervous system

Special senses

Vision

Hearing

Name of applicant	DoB
--------------------------	------------

Glandular system (including diabetes, endocrine, breasts and lymph nodes)

Blood and haematopoietic system

Musculo-skeletal system

Skin

Infectious diseases e.g. Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B, HIV, TB (include test results and dates if relevant)

Immunisations e.g. Hepatitis B, TB (**Hepatitis B immunisation is recommended for foster carers and intercountry adopters**)

3 Mental health

Any history of psychiatric or psychosexual disorder? (This includes anxiety, stress, personality disorders and psychoses)

Any psychiatric or psychological treatment or counselling/psychotherapy? (Specify and give dates and duration)

Any emotional/relationship problems?

If there have been psychiatric/emotional problems, how would you assess the applicant's present condition?

long-term prognosis?

4 Other information

Any other information (hospital admissions, accidents, injuries)

Name of applicant	DoB
--------------------------	------------

5 Investigations

Provide dates and results of investigations if relevant and not detailed elsewhere e.g. x-rays, scans, ECG, exercise tolerance test, lipid profile, glycosylated Hb, liver function, urinalysis, kidney function, etc.

6 Consultations

Please provide details of past and present consultations with specialists:

	Specialist's name	Hospital and patient reference number	Reason/details/dates
Past			
Present			

7 Examination data: every applicant will need a complete examination

Measurements (in light clothes) Height _____ cm

Weight _____ kg

Body Mass Index _____

If BMI > 30,
take waist and hip measurement Waist circumference _____ cm

Hip circumference _____ cm

Blood pressure:
please record and take 2 further readings if the first exceeds 140/90 diastolic (5th phase) or if the pulse rate is abnormal

	Systolic	Diastolic (5th phase)	Pulse rate

Please take urine sample (essential)

Albumin _____ Sugar _____ Blood _____

Name of applicant

DoB

PAGE 10

Provide details of any relevant clinical findings

Blood and haematopoietic system

Anaemia

CVS	Pulse	Rhythm
	Heart	Size
		Sounds
		Murmurs
	Optic fundi	

Respiratory system	Trachea
	Chest shape
	Percussion
	Breath sounds
	Other signs

Digestive system	Mouth
	Abdomen
	Liver
	Spleen
	Hernia

Nervous system	Cranial nerves
	Limb tone
	Tremor
	Reflexes
	Co-ordination
	Sensation
	Other signs

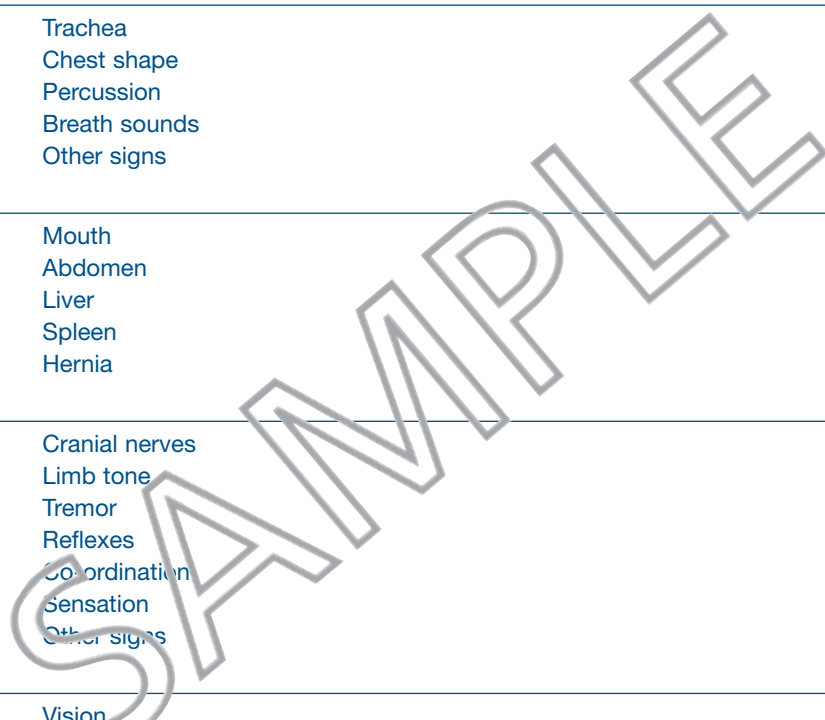
Special senses	Vision
	Hearing

Urogenital system
(only if clinically indicated)

Glandular system	Breasts
	Lymph nodes

Musculo-skeletal system	Spine
	Limbs
	Joints

Skin



Name of applicant	DoB
--------------------------	------------

8 Is any other medical opinion or investigation required? What further action have you taken?

9 Functional assessment (where relevant)

Comment on how the applicant copes physically and mentally with any chronic condition e.g. ability to work, limitation in daily activities, and how this may impact on parenting capacity.

SAMPLE

10 Do you know anything about the applicant's lifestyle which might impair their capacity to care safely for a child or put a child's welfare at risk?

Name of applicant	DoB
--------------------------	------------

11 Comments of examining doctor

Using the applicant’s information and your own assessment, please comment on health and lifestyle issues which may impact (now or in the future) on the applicant’s ability to care for a child. Note that you are **not** being asked to make a decision as to the suitability of the applicant, but to provide sufficient accurate and detailed information to enable the medical adviser to advise the agency on the health of the applicant.

Signature _____ Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

12 Summary report from agency Medical Adviser
This will be entered into Form F and read by the Panel and applicant

Summary of health and lifestyle issues with comments on the significance for adoption/fostering.

Signature _____ Date _____

Name _____ Designation _____

Qualifications _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

Email _____