

Marco Rossi
Director, Standardization and Technical Policy

TO THE ISO MEMBER BODIES

Reference: IWA 49
Date: 2024-06-07

Invitation to an international workshop on: Guidelines for Barnahus, a child friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response model for abused children

Dear ISO Members,

Following approval by the Technical Management Board of a proposal from the Icelandic Standards (IST) and the Swedish Institute for Standards (SIS), we are pleased to invite you to a workshop to develop an International Workshop Agreement (IWA 49) on *Guidelines for Barnahus, a child friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response model for abused children*.

The IWA will be developed in three events to be held on September 5th, October 23rd and 24th, and December 10th, 2024. The first and last events will be held virtually, while the October event will take place in Reykjavik, Iceland.

Meeting information of the Workshop

Workshop dates and times:

- **Virtual Meeting #1:** September 5, 2024, 10:00–14:00 UTC
- **Face-to-Face Workshop in Reykjavik, Iceland:** October 23 and 24, 2024, full day. Optional visit to the Icelandic Barnahus.
- **Virtual Meeting #2:** December 10, 2024, 10:00–14:00 UTC

To participate in the IWA

We ask you to register for the workshop no later than August 25, 2024, through the link below. The participation is free of charge.

[ISO/IWA 49 Guidelines for Barnahus, a child friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response model for abused children - Swedish Institute for Standards, SIS](#)

The Workshop participation will be opened to registered participants only.

**International Organization
for Standardization**

Chemin de Blandonnet 8
1214 Geneva, Switzerland

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central@iso.org

Note: An introductory webinar explaining the background and process will be held on June 20th 2024, 09:00-10:00 UTC (11:00-12:00 CET) with the following agenda:

1. Introduction. Why are we doing this? The background, the purpose, and the long-term goals. Páll Magnússon, chair ISO/IWA 49.
2. Content. What is Barnahus? The child-friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response mode for abused children. Ólöf Ásta Farestveit, General Director, the National Agency for Children and Families, Iceland.
3. ISO and the process of IWA. Joakim Falk, secretary ISO/IWA 49, Swedish Institute for Standards.
4. A promising practice. Support from the Council of Europe. Regina Jensdottir, Head of the Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe.

Register to the introductory webinar [here](#). Participation is open to everyone.

We would be grateful if you could publicize this event in your country.

Yours sincerely,



Marco Rossi

Director, Standardization and Technical Policy

cc. Vice-President (technical management), General Secretary & CEO of IEC



May 2024

Invitation to an international workshop on „Barnahus model, a child friendly multidisciplinary and interagency (MDIA) response model for the investigation and treatment of child abuse - requirements“ (IWA 49)

Dear ISO Members,

Following approval by the Technical Management Board of a proposal from IST (Icelandic Standards) and SIS (Swedish Institute for Standards), we are pleased to enclose the draft schedule and registration information for a workshop to develop an International Agreement on *Barnahus model, a child friendly multidisciplinary and interagency (MDIA) response model for the investigation and treatment of child abuse – requirements*

Workshop dates and times:

Virtual meeting #1: September 5th 2024, 10:00-14:00 UTC

Face to face workshop in Reykjavik, Iceland: 23rd and 24th October 2024, full day. Optional visit to the Icelandic Barnahus.

Virtual meeting #2: December 10th 2024, 10:00-14:00 UTC

We ask you to register for the workshop no later than August 25, 2024 using the link provided here:

[ISO/IWA 49 Guidelines for Barnahus, a child friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response model for abused children - Swedish Institute for Standards, SIS](#)

We assume that you by register to the workshop can participate in all three events.

Gratitudes to those who publicize this event in your country.

Invitation to participate - ISO International Workshop Agreement (IWA 49)

„Barnahus (e. Childrens House) model, a child friendly multidisciplinary and interagency (MDIA) response model for the investigation and treatment of child abuse - requirements“

Icelandic Standards and SIS (acting as secretary) invite all interested stakeholders to participate in an ISO International Workshop to develop and ISO International Workshop Agreement (IWA).

The aim of this IWA is to develop an agreement on requirements, refining the practices of Barnahus/MDIA, a child friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response model for the investigation and treatment of child abuse. The IWA's purpose is to align requirements and harmonize the operation in different systems around the world.

The requirements laid out in the draft of the IWA are aligned with recommendations of the UN Committee of the Rights of the Child (CRC). The Council of Europe recognizes the Barnahus model as a promising practice and has supported several of its member states in setting up tailor made Barnahus model and the European Union in its Strategy for the Rights of the Child has also emphasized the urgency to present an initiative aimed at supporting the development and strengthening of integrated child protection systems, which will encourage all relevant authorities and services to better work together.

The basic principles are the prevention of re-traumatization during investigation and court proceedings and offering wholistic short- and long-term therapeutic services for children and non-offending family members and caretakers.

An IWA is a type of document that is developed with direct participation of stakeholders both within and outside the traditional ISO country representation system to enable market players to negotiate in an “open workshop” environment.

To confirm your participation in the workshop, kindly register via the link provided in this document. Participation is free of charge.

An introductory webinar explaining the background and process will be held on JUNE 20th 2024, 09:00-10:00 UTC (11:00-12:00 CET) with the following agenda:

1. Introduction. Why are we doing this? The background, the purpose, and the long-term goals. Páll Magnússon, chair ISO/IWA 49.
2. Content. What is Barnahus? The child-friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response mode for abused children. Ólöf Ásta Farestveit, General Director, the National Agency for Children and Families, Iceland.
3. ISO and the process of IWA. Joakim Falk, secretary ISO/IWA 49, Swedish Institute for Standards.
4. A promising practice. Support from the Council of Europe. Regina Jensdottir, Head of the Children's Rights Division, Council of Europe.

Register to the introductory webinar [here](#).

Additional information and registration to the Workshop at the dedicated website:

[ISO/IWA 49 Guidelines for Barnahus, a child friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response model for abused children - Swedish Institute for Standards, SIS](#)

You may also contact Mr. Joakim Falk, Joakim.falk@sis.se

We hope that you will join us in this important work!

Sincerely,

Mr. Páll Magnússon, chair ISO/IWA 49

Mr. Joakim Falk, secretary, ISO/IWA 49

Registration

To register for participation in this IWA process, please use the registration tab available at:

[ISO/IWA 49 Guidelines for Barnahus, a child friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response model for abused children - Swedish Institute for Standards, SIS](#)

After registering you will receive invitations to all three events. We emphasize the importance of attendance to both virtual meetings and the face to face workshop:

Virtual workshop#1: September 5th 2024, 10-14 UTC

Face to face workshop #2 in Reykjavik, Iceland: 23rd and 24th October 2024, full day. Optional visit to the Icelandic Barnahus on Oct 25th.

Virtual workshop #3: December 10th 2024, 10-14 UTC

Please note that by registering for participation, you agree to follow ISO Code of Ethics and Conduct: <https://www.iso.org/publication/PUB100011.html>

Time schedule for the development of the IWA

Late May: Registration opens

June 20th : Introductory webinar

Late August: Closure of registration

September 5th: First virtual workshop to confirm and agree on Title, Scope, Outline and Basic Content of the Document.

October 23rd -24th : Physical workshop in Reykjavik

December 10th: Second virtual workshop with participants for approval of the Document.

February 2025: Publication

Between the meetings there will be commenting via correspondence.

If the workshop participants decides that additional meetings are necessary, that can be organized.

Detailed Agenda will follow, after registration along with information about the venue, accommodation etc. The Workshop's web will also contain further information.

Annex 1 – About the IWA Process

ISO's International Workshop Agreements (IWAs)

The IWA model is a quick way to obtain a recognized ISO document for your work. It is designed to be a flexible model so the format and content of the IWA, and the process to obtain it, are largely decided by the proposing organization.

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Make the proposal	Get ISO/TMB approval	ISO/CS circulates the details of the workshop	Hold the workshop and agree the document	Publish the IWA
<p>Approach ISO Central Secretariat or any ISO member with your proposal.</p> <p>Your proposal should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Purpose and justification ✓ Relevant documents ✓ Lists of organizations that may be interested ✓ Indications of any ISO member body willing to act as Secretariat ✓ An estimate of the number of meetings if more than one is envisaged ✓ Details of any proposed special arrangements for distribution of the IWA <p>Note: a form is available to facilitate submitting your proposal for TMB approval.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISO/CS then circulates your proposal to the ISO/TMB for approval (checking any proposed distribution arrangements with the ISO/Sec-Gen). • The TMB will also formally assign / confirm the ISO member body who will be your secretariat for the project. • The ISO member body works with the proposer to decide full details of the Workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Price (if any fee) ✓ Time/Date/Venue ✓ Format ✓ Background ✓ Doc supply ✓ Process ✓ Chair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A notification – with the full details agreed at Step 2 – is circulated to all ISO members (by ISO/CS) • ISO member bodies can then circulate the proposal as widely as possible in order to publicize it to potentially interested parties. <p>Note: Any organization or company or individual is allowed to attend.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the meeting the Chair (nominated in advance) will be confirmed. • During the whole IWA process, the Chair must be impartial and seek to ensure the maximum amount of consensus possible has been achieved. • Document is drafted and circulated to the workshop participants. • This can be repeated until the Chair believes that the best possible consensus has been obtained. <p>Note: One possible mechanism is that the workshop participants work online on a dedicated Web site.</p> <p>Note: Multiple meetings can take place if necessary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The final draft of the IWA is sent by the secretariat to ISO/CS. • ISO/CS formats the document – giving it the relevant ISO cover page / logo. • ISO/CS then supplies the document to all its member bodies who can supply it as they see fit. • Any special arrangements for the distribution of the IWA should be put in place here.
Start - ISO/CS will normally take less than one month to process your proposal	Maximum of three months	Three months (90 days) advance notice is required before holding the workshop.	This stage depends on the scope of the IWA. However, aim to finish in three months or less	One month

Should not take longer than 12 months – aim for less.

ISO's International Workshop Agreements (IWAs)

What is an IWA?

An IWA is an ISO document produced through a workshop meeting rather than through the full ISO technical committee process. Market players and other stakeholders directly participate in developing an IWA and do not have to go through a national delegation.

What subjects do they cover?

An IWA can be produced on any subject

Why should I choose the IWA?

An IWA will:

- Involve the main players from your target sector (public or private) and allow a sector to develop clear rules on an issue.
- Give visibility to your professional practices or reference documents (ISO is a highly recognized international body).
- Help you shape the future direction of the subject and influence any future ISO standard.
- Allow you to develop relationships within a profession or sector.
- Create understanding and co-ordination amongst your various stakeholders.
- Share best practice in a sector.
- Improve quality and interoperability.
- Lead to worldwide visibility due to ISO members' distribution networks.
- Help you to develop a members-only forum to communicate using, for example, a dedicated Web site.

Who will be involved?

Anyone can propose an IWA and anyone can participate in developing one. An ISO member body will be assigned to help you organize and run the workshop. This gives the project credibility by ensuring that the basic principles of international standardization (transparency, fairness and consensus) are applied.

For further details about ISO IWA see [ISO - Deliverables](#)

Annex 2 - ISO IWA Approved Proposal

Proposal for an International Workshop Agreement

A proposal for an International Workshop Agreement (IWA) shall be submitted to the secretariat of the Technical Management Board at ISO/CS (tmb@iso.org). Proposals will be referred to the ISO Technical Management Board for approval (4-week ballot).

Once the proposal for the IWA is approved by the TMB, the proposer will be requested to prepare an announcement/ invitation to the workshop, which will be circulated to the ISO members by ISO/CS. Please note that the announcement must be made at least 90 days in advance of the agreed date to allow potential attendees adequate time to plan on attending the workshop (Annex SI.3).

See the [ISO Supplement Annex SI](#) for full details of the Procedure for the development of IWAs.

Proposer Ministry for Education and Children in Iceland.
Contact details of proposer Name: Páll Magnússon, Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Iceland, Geneva. Email: pallm@mfa.is
Title of the proposed IWA Guidelines for Barnahus, a child friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response model for abused children

Purpose and justification

A high number of children and adolescents are victims of child abuse and violence. The National Children's Alliance estimates that over 600.000 children are abused in the US each year. According to The Crime Survey for England and Wales, it is estimated that 7,5% of adults aged 18 to 75 years experienced sexual abuse before the age of 16. A new survey data among children in Iceland (Icelandic Youth Study, University of Iceland, 2023) estimates that around 17% of girls and 5% of boys have suffered some form of sexual abuse by age 16. Around 66% of those children state that they never told anyone about the abuse.

"The impact of violence is devastating, immediate and lifelong. Violence against children impairs their brain development, their physical and mental health and their ability to learn." (Annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, 2023). Prevention is for most states a priority, but the response is also critical.

In 1998 the Barnahus (children's house) was established in Iceland. Now there are over 40 Barnahus in over 20 European countries. The Council of Europe (CoE) has promoted the Barnahus model since 2015 and has encouraged member states in committing to have at least one Barnahus-type structure in every country.

The Barnahus model is a "child-friendly, multidisciplinary and interagency model that brings together child welfare, criminal, medical, therapeutic and legal services under one roof to coordinate a child-centred response, develop an appropriate governance framework for an interagency service to help reduce re-traumatization for child sexual abuse victims and survivors by preventing the repetition of their experiences". (Report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material, 2023).

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has recommended States Parties to set up child-friendly and intersectoral/multiagency structures to address violence and/or sexual abuse of children. The Committee has made several references to the Barnahus model in its recommendations to State Parties. (Barnahus: a European journey. Mapping study, 2023)

The Council of Europe, through its Committee of the Parties of the Convention on the Protection of Children from Child Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention and Committee) recognises the Barnahus model as a promising practice and has supported several of its 46 member States in setting up tailor made Barnahus through dedicated cooperation projects, funded by the European Commission DG Reform.

The European Union in its Strategy for the Rights of the Child has also emphasised the urgency to present an initiative aimed at supporting the development and strengthening of integrated child protection systems, which will encourage all relevant authorities and services to better work together, in a system that puts the child at the centre. Barnahus is one of such systems.

There is however a need for better international guidelines or standards for the process to implement and operate a child-friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response center. After years of experience, the Icelandic Barnahus model has become one of the leading child-friendly, multidisciplinary models in the investigation and treatment of child abuse and domestic violence in Europe. The model is flexible and can be adapted to different national contexts. Still, in order to practice as a Barnahus, there are foundational criteria and guidelines that should guide the setup and practice in all countries.

The proposed document provides guiding principles, requirements, and recommendations for a multiagency and child friendly response centre for child abuse.

This document is intended to align territorial approaches of response agencies for child victims, which prevents (re)traumatisation.

This document can be used in a collaboration between either solely governmental organizations or by governments and private sector organizations. It is suitable for international organisations, monitoring bodies stakeholders and agencies or response centres for child abuse.

Does the proposed IWA relate to or impact on any existing work in ISO committees?

Yes No

Please list any relevant documents and/or ISO committees

Relevant stakeholders (list of organizations that may be interested)

Counsel of Europe, Barnahus Network, States, Local Government, Europol, experts in the field of Children's Right, experts in the field of Human Rights,

Member body willing to act as secretariat

Swedish Institute for Standards (SIS)

Number of meetings to be held (if more than one is envisaged) and proposed dates

1 Virtual (Sept 5), 1 Face-to-Face (Oct), Virtual (Dec)

Annexes are included with this proposal (give details)

Draft IWA document.

IWA 49 (X)

Secretariat: SIS

Date: 2024-xx-xx

Guidelines for Barnahus, a child friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response model for abused children

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

ISO draws attention to the possibility that the implementation of this document may involve the use of (a) patent(s). ISO takes no position concerning the evidence, validity or applicability of any claimed patent rights in respect thereof. As of the date of publication of this document, ISO *[had/had not]* received notice of (a) patent(s) which may be required to implement this document. However, implementers are cautioned that this may not represent the latest information, which may be obtained from the patent database available at www.iso.org/patents. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

International Workshop Agreement IWA ## was approved at a workshop hosted by *[member body]*, in association with *[organization]*, held in *[city, country]*, in *[month, year]*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

0.1 Background

A high number of children and adolescents are victims of child abuse and violence. The National Children's Alliance estimates that over 600.000 children are abused in the US each year. According to The Crime Survey for England and Wales, it is estimated that 7,5% of adults aged 18 to 75 years experienced sexual abuse before the age of 16. A new survey data among children in Iceland (Icelandic Youth Study, University of Iceland, 2023) estimates that around 17% of girls and 5% of boys have suffered some form of sexual abuse by age 16. Around 66% of those children state that they never told anyone about the abuse.

“The impact of violence is devastating, immediate and lifelong. Violence against children impairs their brain development, their physical and mental health and their ability to learn.” (Annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, 2023). Prevention is for most states a priority, but the response is also critical.

In 1998 the Barnahus (children's house) was established in Iceland. Now there are over 40 Barnahus in over 20 European countries. The Council of Europe (CoE) has promoted the Barnahus model since 2015 and has encouraged member states in committing to have at least one Barnahus-type structure in every country.

The Barnahus model is a “child-friendly, multidisciplinary and interagency model that brings together child welfare, criminal, medical, therapeutic and legal services under one roof to coordinate a child-centred response, develop an appropriate governance framework for an interagency service to help reduce re-traumatization for child sexual abuse victims and survivors by preventing the repetition of their experiences”. (Report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material, 2023).

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has recommended States Parties to set up child-friendly and intersectoral/multiagency structures to address violence and/or sexual abuse of children. The Committee has made several references to the Barnahus model in its recommendations to State Parties. (Barnahus: a European journey. Mapping study, 2023)

The Council of Europe, through its Committee of the Parties of the Convention on the Protection of Children from Child Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention and Committee) recognises the Barnahus model as a promising practice and has supported several of its 46 member States in setting up tailor made Barnahus through dedicated cooperation projects, funded by the European Commission DG Reform.

The European Union in its Strategy for the Rights of the Child has also emphasised the urgency to present an initiative aimed at supporting the development and strengthening of integrated child protection systems, which will encourage all relevant authorities and services to better work together, in a system that puts the child at the centre. Barnahus is one of such systems.

There is although a need for better guidelines or standards for the process to implement and operate a child-friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response center. After years of experience, the Icelandic Barnahus model has become one of the leading child friendly, multidisciplinary models in the investigation and treatment of child abuse in Europe. The model is flexible and can be adapted to different national contexts. Still, in order to practice as a Barnahus, there are foundational criteria and guidelines that should guide the setup and practice in all countries.

0.2 Basic principles of the Barnahus/MDIA model

Barnahus/MDIA model is a child-friendly multidisciplinary and interagency (MDIA) response model for the investigation and treatment of child abuse. It is defined as a child-friendly, safe environment for children, bringing together relevant services under one roof for the purposes of providing the child a

coordinated and effective response and for preventing re-traumatization during investigation and court proceedings. The model offers trauma-focused psychological interventions to children and their parents/caregivers following the investigation phase. The model includes “four rooms” embedded in a multidisciplinary environment, where professionals from different disciplines collaborate in the areas of child protection, criminal justice, physical and mental well-being. The central goal is to coordinate the parallel criminal and child welfare investigations and treatment of child abuse.

The children’s disclosure is essential when it comes to the investigation of child abuse. Therefore, using Forensic Interviewing Protocols based on research into children's development on cognitive and communicative abilities and questioning techniques, enhances children's capacities to provide accurate information about their past experiences.

In regard to treatment, trauma-focus, evidence-based psychological interventions can help children and adolescence address the negative effect of trauma. Including processing their traumatic memories, overcome problematic thoughts and behaviours, and develop effective coping skills.

A multidisciplinary collaboration between the systems of health care, judicial and child protection services is a key aspect of Barnahus/MDIA model. It can be formally embedded in a national or local structure that consists of judicial system, child protection services and health care.

Forensic interviews are carried out according to an evidence-based protocol by an interviewer who is specially educated in children’s development.

The evidentiary validity of the child’s statement is ensured by appropriate arrangements in line with the principles of due process. The aim is to prevent the child from having to repeat his/her statement during court proceedings if an indictment is made.

Trauma-focused evidence-based psychological treatment and short- and long-term therapeutic services for child and non-offending family members and caretakers are made available.

0.3 Use of this document

This document provides guiding principles, requirements, and recommendations for a multiagency and child friendly response centre for child abuse.

This document is intended to align territorial approaches of response agencies for child victims, which prevents (re)traumatisation.

This document can be used in a collaboration between either solely governmental organizations or by governments and private sector organizations. It is suitable for international organisations, monitoring bodies stakeholders and agencies or response centres for child abuse.

Guidelines for Barnahus, a child friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response model for abused children

1 Scope

This document provides requirements and recommendations for Barnahus, a child-friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response model for abused children. It provides a wholistic framework for a multidisciplinary and interagency collaboration to ensure that abused children are provided with a child-friendly, professional and effective response in a safe environment.

NOTE: This model is primarily designed for services in relation to abused children. However, it might also be applicable to traumatized children in general, like child victims of domestic violence and child victims of war.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1

Barnahus

multidisciplinary and interagency response model (MDIA)

a child-friendly multidisciplinary and interagency response model for the investigation and treatment of child abuse.

NOTE: Whether the term Barnahus or multidisciplinary and interagency response model (MDIA) should be used throughout the document is for the workshop to decide.

3.2

Trauma-focused Evidence-based Psychological Treatment

evidence-based psychological treatment approach that helps children, adolescents, and their parents/caregivers overcome trauma-related difficulties, including child abuse and.

4 Requirements and recommendations

4.1 General

Barnahus/MDIA shall establish a child friendly environment where all services are under one roof; medical examination, forensic interviews, assessment, psychological therapy and support and child protection.

Barnahus/MDIA shall maintain and continually improve child-friendly services, including the processes needed and their interactions.

Barnahus/MDIA shall ensure;

- Coordination of interagency collaboration, planning and case management
- Management, evaluation and oversight of the implementation of guidelines and routines
- Elaboration of annual narrative and financial reports of the MDIA service's activity

- Collection and analysis of data and statistics
- External competence building
- Performance evaluation

4.2 Best interest of the child

The best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration in all actions and decisions concerning the child and the non-offending family/caregivers/support persons.

4.3 Child participation

Children's rights to express their views and to receive information should be respected and fulfilled. Children and family/caregivers should receive adequate information regarding available and necessary treatment and should be able to influence the timing, location and set-up of interventions.

4.4 Child protection

Assessment of the protection needs of the child victim and potential siblings in the family shall be made; and follow up to be ensured.

Social services, child protection agency or a comparable private body should be responsible for;

- Child protection assessment and acute risk assessment
- Providing information to child and parents/caregivers
- Follow-up from referral to conclusion of psychological treatment with child and parents/caregivers
- Observation in forensic interviews
- Actively engaging in Barnahus/MDIA collaboration, planning and case management

4.5 Preventing undue delay

Measures should be taken to avoid undue delay, ensuring that forensic interviews, child protection assessments, mental health and medical examinations and psychological treatment take place within a stipulated time period and that children benefit from timely information.

4.6 Multidisciplinary and interagency collaboration

Barnahus/MDIA should be formally embedded in the national or local social or child protection services or comparable services, law enforcement/judicial system or national health system. Barnahus/MDIA model can operate as an independent service if it enjoys a statutory role, recognised by the national or local authorities.

Barnahus/MDIA collaboration should be structured and transparent. There should be clearly established roles, mandates, coordination mechanisms, budget, measures for monitoring and evaluation. MDIA collaboration begins at the initial report of suspected child abuse and continues throughout the case management.

4.7 Non-discrimination

The target group should include all children who are victims and/or witnesses of crime involving all forms of violence. Non-offending family/care-givers should be included as a secondary target group.

4.8 Child friendly environment

4.8.1 Place and accessibility

The Barnahus/MDIA model premises should be situated in an anonymous building located in a child friendly environment and accessible by public transport and for children with special needs.

4.8.2 Interior environment

Furnishing and material should be child and family-friendly and age-appropriate. The premises should be physically safe for children at all ages and developmental stages. Separate, soundproof and private areas should be available.

4.8.3 Preventing contact with the alleged offender

The premises should be set up so that contact between victim and alleged offenders is avoided at all times.

4.8.4 Interview room

Live observation of interviews should be made possible for the interagency team in a separate room from the interview room.

4.9 Interagency planning and case management

4.9.1 Procedures and routines

Interagency case review and planning should be formalised by mutually agreed procedures and routines which are evaluated on a regular basis. Continuous documentation and access to relevant case information to the interagency team members shall be ensured.

4.9.2 Support person

A designated, trained individual/ member of the Barnahus/MDIA team should monitor the MDIA response to ensure continuous support and follow-up with the child and non-offending family/caregivers.

4.10 Forensic interviews

4.10.1 Location and recording

Forensic interviews should be conducted in the Barnahus/MDIA premises. Interviews shall be audio-visually recorded in order to avoid repeated interviewing and to avoid submitting children to repeated interviews conducted by different individuals in different agencies.

NOTE a recorded interview can also be used in court

4.10.2 MDIA presence

The forensic interview should be carried out by a single professional. All relevant members of the Barnahus/MDIA team should be able to observe the forensic interview; either live in an adjacent room or recorded. There should a system in place allowing interaction between the interviewer and the observers.

4.10.3 Adaption to child

The interview shall be adapted to the child's age, development and cultural background and consider the child's special needs. The number of interviews should be limited to the minimum necessary for the criminal investigation. The same professional should conduct the interview if multiple interviews are necessary.

4.10.4 Interview protocols

Forensic interviewing evidence-based protocols shall be used by specialised staff, such as police or mental health professionals with knowledge about child development: Forensic interviews should be carried out by trained staff according to evidence-based forensic interviewing protocols to ensure the quality and quantity of the evidence.

4.10.5 Examples of responsibilities of forensic interviewer

Investigative interviews:

- Obtaining the child’s testimony under the auspice of a court judge and under observation of the defendant's attorney, the defendant, the prosecution, the police, the local child protection services and the child’s legal advocate.
 - The judge mediates question from the observants through the specially trained interviewer.
 - The child’s testimony is recorded to be used as the child’s testimony in court if an indictment is made.
- Or, obtaining the child’s testimony under the auspice of the prosecution, under the observation of the child’s legal advocate (substitute guardian), the police and the local child protection services.
 - The prosecution mediates question from the observants through the specially trained interviewer.
 - Before an inditement is made, the defendant’s advocate can use the child’s testimony to prepare questions if needed, which will later be asked by the same specially trained interviewer to the child.
 - The child’s testimony is recorded to be used as the child’s testimony in court if an indictment is made.
 - If the child needs to be interviewed again, only the new questions are asked by the same specially trained interviewer to the child.

Exploratory interviews:

- Investigating suspicion of child abuse when the disclosure is absent or ambiguous.
- Collaborating with the police in the pre-investigation of cases where evidence is absent but there is a strong suspicion of abuse.
- Obtaining the child’s testimony in cases where the suspected offender is below the age of criminal responsibility.
- Exploring if children who are siblings of a child abuse victim have also experienced abuse.

4.11 Medical evaluation and treatment

4.11.1 Place and organisation

Medical evaluations and/ or forensic medical evaluations should routinely be carried out by specialised staff in the Barnahus/MDIA premises, unless, in special cases a hospital setting is required.

Medical staff should be present in case review and planning meetings as appropriate.

4.11.2 Competence and responsibilities

Medical examination should be carried out by specialised staff including paediatricians and paediatric nurses specialized in forensic medical examination.

They should be responsible for;

- Medical and/or forensic medical evaluations and treatment
- Actively engaging in interagency collaboration, planning and/or case management

NOTE Medical evaluation can serve forensic investigative purposes, as well as to ensure the child's physical well-being and recovery.

4.12 Mental health and psychological assessment, treatment and support

4.12.1 Assessment, treatment and support

Assessment and trauma-focused psychological evidence-based treatment should be available for child abuse victims, who are referred to the Barnahus/MDIA response, by child clinical psychologist and professionals with specialised training and expertise.

Short- and/or long-term therapeutic services for child and non-offending family members and caretakers should be available.

NOTE The purpose of trauma-focused therapy is to teach children, adolescents, and their parents/caregivers' skills and strategies to assist them in better understanding, coping with, processing emotions and memories tied to traumatic experiences, with the end goal of enabling the child and adolescent to create a healthier and more adaptive meaning of the experience that took place in his/her life.

4.12.2 Crisis intervention

There should be a clear organisational structure and permanent staff in place to routinely offer crisis support for the child and non-offending family members/caregivers, when needed.

4.12.3 Competence and responsibilities

Specialised mental health professionals or child and adolescent psychiatry, should be responsible for;

- Implementing assessment and evidence-based trauma-focused psychological treatment and support
- Actively engaging in Barnahus/MDIA collaboration, planning and case management

4.13 Training, supervision and guidance

4.13.1 Training of professionals

The members of the Barnahus/MDIA team and involved agencies should receive regular training in their specific areas of expertise and should be offered joint training in cross-cutting issues.

4.13.2 Guidance, supervision, counselling

The members of the Barnahus/MDIA team should have access to regular guidance, supervision, counselling and peer supervision.

4.14 Information sharing, awareness raising and external competence building

4.14.1 Data collection, information sharing and awareness raising

Aggregated and disaggregated data/statistics should be collected and shared with relevant stakeholders to create awareness, facilitate research and support evidence-based legislation, policy and procedures.

4.14.2 External competence building

Competence and knowledge should be increased among professionals working for and with children through study visits, information meetings, lectures and producing written material.

4.15 Performance Evaluation

The organisation should determine performance evaluation with deciding;

ISO #####-#:####(X)

- What needs to be measured
- Methods for measurement and data collection
- When results from measurements should be analysed and evaluated
- How results shall be used for improvements and increased efficiency.

NOTE Methods described in chapter 9 in ISO 9001:2015 can be used for more detailed requirements regarding Performance monitoring, measurement, analysis and evaluation.

Annex A (informative)

Main function of Barnahus/MDIA model

A.1 General set up

This annex presents the role and responsibilities of participants in the Barnahus/MDIA model. (See figure A.1)

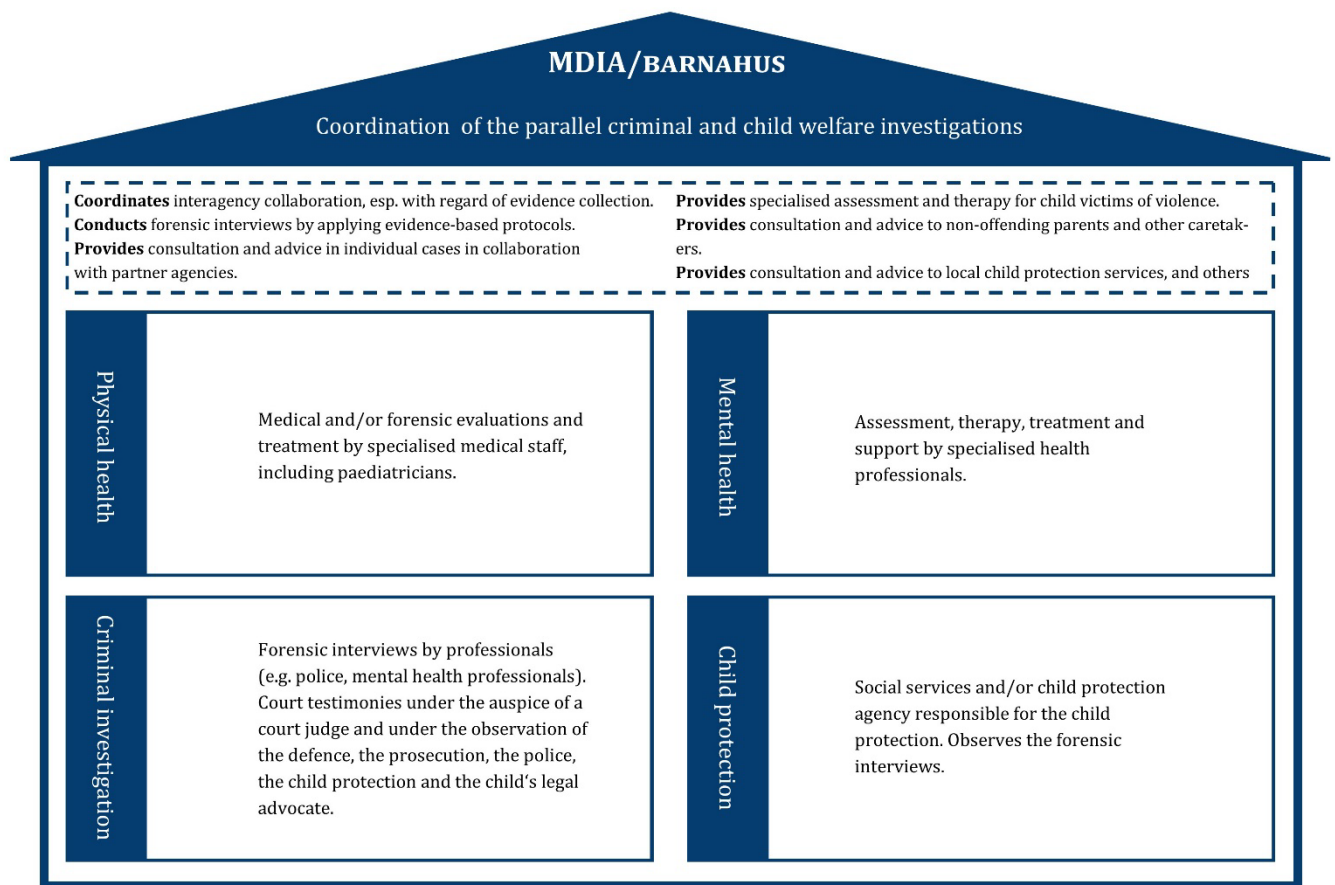


Figure B.1.

A.2 Level of involvement

Barnahus/MDIA staff:

Evaluation phase

Implementation phase

Operational phase

Judicial system:

ISO #####-#:####(X)

Evaluation phase

Implementation phase

Operational phase

Healthcare system (both medical and mental health):

Evaluation phase

Implementation phase

Operational phase

Social services or comparable bodies:

Evaluation phase

Implementation phase

Operational phase

A.3 Funding:

Barnahus/MDIA model can be governed by national procedures and formal interagency agreements and financed by public funding.

The participating agencies and/or private bodies can contribute to the costs for the Barnahus/MDIA, including for their own staff and equipment. External funding could be secured for the set-up and initial operation and phased out gradually to be replaced by sustained public funding.

Annex XX
(informative)

Workshop contributors

Country <i>In alphabetical order</i>	Representation
<i>[Name of country]</i>	<i>[Name of organization/company]</i>
<i>[Name of country]</i>	<i>[Name of organization/company]</i>
<i>[Name of country]</i>	<i>[Name of organization/company]</i>
<i>[Name of country]</i>	<i>[Name of organization/company]</i>
<i>[Name of country]</i>	<i>[Name of organization/company]</i>
<i>[Name of country]</i>	<i>[Name of organization/company]</i>
<i>[Name of country]</i>	<i>[Name of organization/company]</i>
<i>[Name of country]</i>	<i>[Name of organization/company]</i>

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