Pseudo Strabismus / Epicanthus
Information for patients

What is pseudo strabismus?
A pseudo strabismus or pseudo squint is the false appearance of an eye deviation or ‘squint’. It looks as if one or both eyes turn in, out, up or down; but in fact the eyes are straight. This false impression of a squint is often most noticeable in photographs and when the child turns their head slightly or looks at an angle:

Pseudo (‘false’) strabismus: note the light reflections (white dots) are central in each eye.

True strabismus (squint): note the light reflection (white dot) is central in the child’s right eye, but on the edge of the coloured part of the left eye. This shows a true left convergent squint (left eye turning in).
What causes a pseudo strabismus?
The most common causes are **epicanthus** (prominent folds of skin over the inside corner of the eye), and/or a flat bridge of the nose. Other causes include a large or narrow distance between the eyes, and different coloured eyes (heterochromia).

It is common?
Yes. Many babies have pseudo strabismus.

What is the treatment?
No treatment is required. As your child grows, the bridge of the nose will develop, and the pseudo strabismus (false appearance of a squint) will become less noticeable.

Assessment of your child
The Orthoptist will check your child’s vision in each eye and test to ensure that your child doesn’t have true strabismus (squint). Your child will be monitored until we are able to test their vision using pictures or letters in a row. Your child may then be ready for discharge to a local Optician for continued care.

Testing for glasses
Your child will be tested to see if they need glasses, at approximately two years of age, by an Optometrist (hospital Optician).

Benefits of assessment
The assessment usually gives reassurance that your child doesn’t have a true squint and that their vision is good. However, if your child is found to have a squint it is helpful to find out early, in order to receive advice on the best course of management and any treatment required.
**Risks of not having assessment for pseudo strabismus**

A true squint can occur in children at different ages and can cause significant vision defects if left untreated. It is important to attend all hospital appointments if your child has been diagnosed with pseudo strabismus as a baby, as they may still develop a true squint at a later stage / when they are older.

**Future vision assessment**

Children in Medway and Swale primary schools are funded for a vision screening check by an Orthoptist in their reception year at age four to five years old.

There is no funded vision screening in Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells primary schools, so your child may be offered a further hospital appointment instead.

Older children able to attend the local Optician are entitled to free eye examinations by an Optometrist until the age of 16 years.
Contact details

Maidstone Orthoptic Clinic
 ☎ 01622 226236

Medway Orthoptic Clinic
 ☎ 01634 830000 ext 5792

Tunbridge Wells Orthoptic Clinic
 ☎ 01892 633890
For non appointment enquiries only you can email: mtw-tr.PemburyOrthoptics@nhs.net

Sittingbourne Orthoptic Clinic
 ☎ 01795 418300 ext 2015

NHS 111
☎ 111

NHS Choices online
www.nhs.uk

MTW NHS Trust is committed to making its patient information accessible in a range of languages and formats. If you need this leaflet in another language or format please ask one of your clinical care team or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). We will do our best to arrange this.

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust welcomes all forms of feedback from our service users. If the standard of service you have received from the Trust does not meet your expectations, we want to hear from you. Please speak with the ward manager or the nurse in charge in the first instance, or you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on:

**Telephone:** ☎ 01622 224960 or ☎ 01892 632953

**Email:** mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net

or visit their office at either Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells Hospital between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

You can be confident that your care will not be affected by highlighting any areas of concern or making a complaint. The Trust will retain a record of your contact, which is held separately to any medical records. If you are acting on behalf of a patient, we may need to obtain the patient’s consent in order to protect patient confidentiality. More information on PALS or making a complaint can be found on the Trust’s website: www.mtw.nhs.uk or pick up a leaflet from main reception.

Issue date: November 2014    Review date: November 2017
Database reference: RWF-OPLF-PPC5    © MTW NHS Trust