

Genetics awareness

Who is affected?

- Families from all communities can be affected by genetic disorders.
- We know more about genes today than we used to, so it's right that we have access to information and services if we need them.
- There are many health problems associated with genes, but in infant health there is particular concern with problems caused by recessive genes.
- Common examples of these types of conditions include cystic fibrosis, sickle cell disease, thalassaemia and some neurological and metabolic diseases.
- For conditions caused by recessive genes, the risk is higher in families with a marriage to a close relative, eg: a cousin, as it's more likely they both carry the same gene.

It's important to note that most children born to cousins are healthy and unaffected but babies born to parents who have the same recessive gene are at a higher risk of being born with an inherited health problem.

- A genetic counsellor will be able to give a more rounded picture about your risk of genetic problems and what your choices are around this.
- Genetics affect us all, the more we understand the issues and the risks, the more we will be able to make informed choices.

www.nhs.uk/conditions/genetics

www.geneticalliance.org.uk

www.cafamily.org.uk