

## “My Little Journey”

### Assessing the quality of information delivery to paediatric patients

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#### Introduction

Parents and children experience high anxiety levels during the perioperative period, which can be improved with both practical and psychological preparation preoperatively, for example using the RCOA information leaflet (1). In 2019, there were 3614 paediatric patients at Portsmouth Hospital, with over 75% undergoing an elective procedure. It has been suggested that one hospital visit can have a long term negative psychosocial impact. The aim of this project was to assess the satisfaction levels of parents of children undergoing a general anaesthetic, and the quality of care and information delivery.

#### Methodology

A survey was designed based on the RCOA standards for best practice in paediatric patients (2):

- ✦ 90% of parents should receive information preoperatively
- ✦ 100% of parents should find this satisfactory
- ✦ 100% should find the anaesthetic assessment satisfactory
- ✦ 100% should be satisfied with arrangements for induction

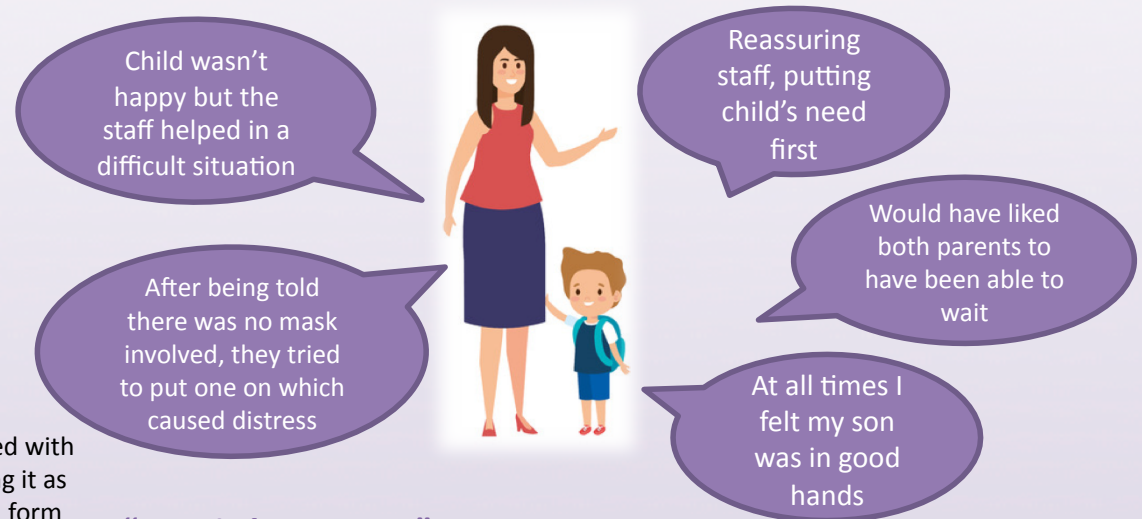
Paper questionnaires were given to parents preoperatively, including questions about information delivery and clinical care. The questionnaires were collected following the patient’s return to the ward postoperatively.

#### Results

40 questionnaires were completed. Over 90% of parents were satisfied with the information they received prior to assessment by a clinician, rating it as “excellent”, but the majority would prefer this in an interactive media form rather than a paper leaflet. 35% of parents did not find the induction of anaesthesia a positive experience, due to a lack of information in advance for both the parent and child. A common need was further guidance on management of postoperative pain; starvation status and eating (which requires collaboration with the surgical team); and the timing of discharge.

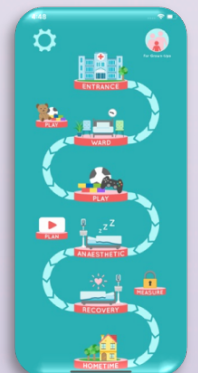
#### Discussion

The survey demonstrated overall excellent satisfaction rates. Not all parents received adequate information preoperatively, which could be due to administrative failings, or surgery at short notice. Although the experiences at induction were not always positive, this did not necessarily reflect on the delivery and quality of care. More information preoperatively could manage patient expectations better. However, it is evident that more information is required in easily available formats.



#### “My Little Journey” app

Based on this survey, a business case was produced and funding was approved for the introduction of the “Little Journey” app, tailored specifically to the hospital, with interactive 3D photos and information about the perioperative journey. The app is freely downloadable and has been shown at other sites to reduce perioperative anxiety in paediatric patients and their parents; fewer cancellations; and improve speed to discharge. No staff or time resources are needed for information delivery, and it is more environmentally friendly than paper leaflets. Usage of the app will be monitored and used to assess parent satisfaction later this year.



#### References

1. Guidelines for the provision of paediatric anaesthetic services. RCOA, London 2011 ([www.rcoa.ac.uk/node/714](http://www.rcoa.ac.uk/node/714)).
2. Middle, J & Wee, M. Audit Recipe Book. *Royal College of Anaesthetists*, 2012.