



This work has been submitted to **NECTAR**, the **Northampton Electronic Collection of Theses and Research**.

Conference or Workshop Item

Title: Parent and healthcare professional use of language: a literature review

Creators: Burrows, M., Neill, S., Redwood, T., Corr, S. and Lakhanpaul, M.

Example citation: Burrows, M., Neill, S., Redwood, T., Corr, S. and Lakhanpaul, M. (2012) Parent and healthcare professional use of language: a literature review. Poster presented to: *Royal College of Nursing (RCN) Joint Children and Young People Conference and Exhibition: Making the Principles of Nursing Practice Work for Children and Young People, Leeds, 12-13 October 2012.*

Version: Presented version

<http://nectar.northampton.ac.uk/4517/>



Parent and healthcare professional use of language: a literature review

Michael Burrows^a, Dr Sarah Neill^a, Dr Tracy Redwood^a, Prof. Susan Corr^a and Prof. Monica Lakhanpaul^b

a:University of Northampton b:University College London

Introduction

Aims

- To understand existing research examining parental and HCP use of language; what does the research show?
- To understand the limits of current research and provide context for further research.

Method

- Literature was identified from searches of academic databases (Pubmed, Sciencedirect, Oxford Journals) using a selection of keywords or phrases, between 02/12-06/12.
- An integrative literature review methodology was employed.
- Seven papers from the UK (3) and the USA (2), Israel (1) and France (1) meet the selection criteria and were assessed

Table 1: Selection criteria

Population	Parents, carers or guardians with children (up to adolescence)
Setting	Literature reporting on data collected from both GP surgeries and A&Es were included
Condition	Literature covering acute illness were included. Those which cover communication in serious or chronic illnesses were not, as parents are likely to have different communication experiences.

Findings

Patients have difficulty with medical terminology or information, ranging from medical terms, organ location, cancer and asthma vernacular. These findings are mirrored in research with parents, however studies are rare.

- Gittleman (2004) found that parents (n=122) could not define meningitis (70%), lethargy (64%) and virus (40%) correctly. Parents appeared to have general information, but lack depth.
- Other studies (Michel 2006; Cane 2004) have shown less than 50% (n=139) concordance between parents and HCP for definitions of wheeze and most parents definitions did not map onto epidemiological definitions.
- Kai (1996) showed that parents felt they received too little information about their child's illness. They saw the terms virus and bug as confusing, vague and a catchall diagnosis, in turn causing anxiety over reassurance.
- Parents have been shown to have difficulties in understanding information presented in A&E. (Cramm and Dowd, 2008; Waisman et al, 2003; Chappy et al, 2012). One-fifth of parents did not understand information provided to them and understanding was affected by the perception of pain in their child.

The literature review showed a disparity between HCP and parental use of language.

Discussion

- Overall there was a lack of previous research and what exists shows a disparity between HCP and parents use of language
- Current research doesn't examine acute illness nor how these differences affect parents and child health.
- Most research reviewed was quantitative and therefore limited in scope and exploratory capacity.
- This review highlights the need for further in-depth qualitative study to fully explore this topic.

References

- Cane, R. S., Ranganathan, S. C. and McKenzie, S. A. (2000) What do parents of wheezy children understand by wheeze? *Archives of Disease in Childhood*. 82 (4), 327-332
- Chappuy, H., Taupin, P., Dimet, J., Claessens, Y. E., Treluyer, J. M., Cheron-G. and the GFRUP (2012). Do parents understand the medical information provided in paediatric emergency departments? A prospective multicenter study. *Acta Paediatrica*. 101(10), 1089-1094.
- Cramm, K. J. and Dowd, M. D. (2008). What are you waiting for? A study of resident physician-parent communication in a pediatric emergency department. *Annals of Emergency Medicine*. 51(4):361-6.
- Gittleman, M., Mahabee-Gittens, E. and Gonzalez-del-Rey, J. (2004) Common medical terms defined by parents: Are we speaking the same language? *Pediatric Emergency Care*. 20 (11), 754.
- Kai, J. (1996) Parents' difficulties and information needs in coping with acute illness in preschool children: A qualitative study. *BMJ*. 313 (7063), 987-990.
- Michel, G., Silverman, M., Strippoli, M., Zwahlen, M., Brooker, A., Grigg, J. and Kuehni, C. (2006) Parental understanding of wheeze and its impact on asthma prevalence estimates. *The European Respiratory Society*. 28 (6), 1124.
- Waisman, Y., Siegal, N., Chemo, M., Siegal, G., Amir, L., Blachar, Y., Mimouni, M. (2003). Do parents understand emergency department discharge instructions? A survey analysis *Israeli Medical Association Journal*. 5(567), 70.