

Patient and Parent Experiences of a Paediatric Outpatient Antibiotic Therapy (p-OPAT) service in a Regional Children's Hospital

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Abstract

Background :There is compelling evidence to support the management of children receiving intravenous antibiotics at home under a p-OPAT service. Benefits include a reduction of healthcare-associated-infections, cost-savings, parent/patient satisfaction, psychological wellbeing and earlier return to school/employment. Currently, data regarding the experiences of patients and families being managed by OPAT services are lacking.

Aims & Objectives: To evaluate the experiences of children and their parents receiving intravenous antibiotic therapy at home under a regional p-OPAT team.

Methods: During an 18-month period (July-2012 to December-2013), 67 patients were treated by a regional children's hospital p-OPAT team. After completing treatment, 55 feedback questionnaires were sent out, of which 47 (85%) were returned. 8 patients were not given questionnaires; 2 patients had completed a questionnaire from a previous p-OPAT episode and for 6 patients it was not deemed appropriate due to readmission for other reasons. Children and parents were asked to jointly complete the questionnaire

Results: All 47 (100%) families agreed or strongly agreed that p-OPAT was preferable to inpatient treatment and would accept this form of treatment again. A recurring theme was the parental perception that management at home had expedited their child's recovery following serious illness. Parents also commented on the importance of clear communication between the hospital, community teams and the families.

Conclusions: This audit clearly demonstrates that p-OPAT is wanted and accepted and for the majority of families, is the preferable option compared with extended inpatient stays. Managing children on home intravenous antibiotics should be considered whenever possible within a structured governance framework.

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