Group Clinics for Children Under Five Years with Wheeze: The Whittington Experience

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Whittington paediatric asthma team hypothesised that group consultations would improve outcomes compared to traditional to 1:1 appointments. Children, under 5, who attend A&E or are admitted with viral induced wheeze are reviewed within 4-6 weeks of presentation. Review is to educate families about risk factors, recognise and manage symptoms and develop preventative strategies to avoid future A&E attendances or admissions. Two members of staff form this review, each see child individually. Information shared with families is very repetitive. Patients do not attend, leading to wasted clinic time.

Team hypothesised that a group clinic could:

- Improve outcomes
- Save and reduce clinic to two hours
- Reduce clinicians’ wasted time when families Do Not Attend
- Reduce repetitive nature of consultations.

Asthma team had group consultations practice development training, funded by Camden, Islington and Haringey Community Education Provider Networks. First group consultation took place in July 2018.

Families were asked a series of I Statements that described positive impacts, and a number of open questions focusing on what worked well and what could be changed to improve group consultation experience.

- 58% ‘I learnt something new from professionals’
- 58% ‘I learnt something new from my peers’
- 50% ‘I understand the health condition better’
- 50% ‘I built my confidence to take control of my child’s health condition’

Families found atmosphere relaxed and child friendly; felt safe and had time to talk about their concerns; group talked about the things that mattered to them.

“You are with people who understand the struggle and can relate”

Time taken to deliver group clinics compared to 1:1 appointments was estimated and DNA rates of both clinics were audited. There was a reduction of 55% (average) time taken to run group consultations. There was a 31% reduction in DNAs at group clinics.