

Stabilisation of the critically ill child: Organisational Questionnaire

A. Introduction

What is this study about?

The aim of this study is to:

- Identify good practice and areas for improvement in the quality of care provided to children and young people who are critically ill and require stabilisation
- Review the impact of delivering that care on staff and parent carers

Inclusions

All acute hospitals where children and young people (CYP) aged 0 to 16th birthday may present.

Who should complete this questionnaire?

This questionnaire has been designed to collect data on the organisational structures surrounding the care of critically ill children and young people (CYP) who require stabilisation.

The questionnaire should be completed by someone who has knowledge of the pathways of care for these patients within this hospital. This is likely to include intensivists (paediatric and adult – tertiary and secondary care), emergency medicine clinicians (paediatric and adult), paediatricians, anaesthetists (paediatric and adult), physicians, critical care nurses, critical care outreach clinicians, and surgeons (paediatric and adult).

Questions or help

If you have any queries about this study or this questionnaire, please contact: stabilisation@ncepod.org.uk or telephone 020 7251 9060.

CPD accreditation

Consultants who complete NCEPOD questionnaires make a valuable contribution to the investigation of patient care. Completion of questionnaires also provides an opportunity for consultants to review their clinical management and undertake a period of personal reflection. These activities have a continuing medical and professional development value for individual consultants. Consequently, NCEPOD recommends that consultants who complete NCEPOD questionnaires keep a record of this activity which can be included as evidence of internal/self directed Continuous Professional Development in their appraisal portfolio.

About NCEPOD

The National Confidential Enquiry into Patient Outcome and Death (NCEPOD) reviews healthcare practice by undertaking confidential studies, and makes recommendations to improve the quality of the delivery of care, for healthcare professionals and policymakers to implement. Data to inform the studies are collected from NHS hospitals and Independent sector hospitals across England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Offshore Islands. NCEPOD are supported by a wide range of bodies and the Steering Group consists of members from the Medical Royal Colleges and Specialist Associations, as well as observers from The Coroners Society of England and Wales, and the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP).

Impact of NCEPOD

Recommendations from NCEPOD reports have had an impact on many areas of healthcare including:
Development of the NICE 'Acutely ill patients in hospital guideline' (CG50) – 'An Acute Problem' (2005).
Appointment of a National Clinical Director for Trauma Care – 'Trauma: Who Cares?' (2007).
Development of NICE Clinical Guidelines for Acute Kidney Injury, published 2013 – 'Adding Insult to Injury' (2009).
Development of ICS Standards for the care of adult patients with a temporary Tracheostomy, published 2014 – 'On the right trach?' (2014).
Development of guidelines from the British Society of Gastroenterology: diagnosis and management of acute lower gastrointestinal bleeding, published 2019 – 'Time to Get Control' (2015).
Development of the British Thoracic Society's Quality Standards for NIV, published 2018 – 'Inspiring Change' (2017).
Development of NHSE Children and young people's cancer service specification - 'On the Right Course?' (2018)
Update to NICE 'Transition from children's to adults' services' Quality Standard (QS140) - 'The Inbetweeners' (2023)
Update to NICE 'Endometriosis: diagnosis and management' guideline (CG73) - 'A long and painful road' (2024)
Development of the GIRFT Children and Young People: Testicular torsion pathway - 'Twist and Shout'

(2024)

This study was commissioned by The Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership (HQIP) as part of the Clinical Outcome Review Programme into Child Health.

B. Organisational details

1. Is this hospital:

- A stand alone tertiary paediatric centre
- A tertiary paediatric centre in a Trust/Health Board that also treats adults
- A University Teaching Hospital in a Trust/Health Board
- A District General Hospital
- Unknown

If not listed above, please specify here...

2. Does this hospital have:

- A dedicated paediatric emergency department
- An emergency department (for both children and adults)
- An emergency department that only treats adults
- No emergency department
- Unknown

3. If answered "An emergency department that only treats adults" to [2] then: If adult only emergency department, what is the lowest age limit for patients accepted for stabilisation?

Years

Unknown

Paediatric high dependency unit (PHDU)

1a. Does this hospital have a paediatric high dependency unit (PHDU)?

- Yes No Unknown

**1b. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:
Is this:**

- Commissioned Non-commissioned Unknown

**1c. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:
How many beds does the PHDU have?**

**1d. If answered "No" to [1a] then:
Door-to-door, approximately how long does it take using an ambulance blue light to get to the hospital's nearest PHDU?**

- <30 minutes 30-60 minutes 61-120 minutes 121-180 minutes
 >180 minutes Unknown

**1e. If answered "No" to [1a] then:
Does this hospital have network arrangements with the nearest PHDU to transfer critically ill children?**

- Yes No Unknown

High Dependency Unit (HDU)

2a. Does this hospital have a high dependency unit (HDU)?

- Yes No Unknown

**2b. If answered "Yes" to [2a] then:
Is this:**

- Commissioned Non-commissioned Unknown

**2c. If answered "Yes" to [2a] then:
How many beds does the HDU have?**

**2d. If answered "No" to [2a] then:
Door-to-door, approximately how long does it take using an ambulance blue light to get to the hospital's nearest HDU?**

- <30 minutes 30-60 minutes 61-120 minutes 121-180 minutes
 >180 minutes Unknown

**2e. If answered "No" to [2a] then:
Does this hospital have network arrangements with the nearest HDU to transfer critically ill children?**

- Yes No Unknown

Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU)

3a. Does this hospital have a paediatric intensive care unit (PICU)?

- Yes No Unknown

**3b. If answered "Yes" to [3a] then:
How many beds does the PICU have?**

- Unknown

**3c. If answered "Yes" to [3a] then:
What is the upper age limit of patients accepted for stabilisation?**

**3d. If answered "Yes" to [3a] then:
Please provide further information regarding upper age limits:**

**3e. If answered "No" to [3a] then:
Door-to-door, approximately how long does it take using an ambulance blue light to get to the hospital's nearest PICU?**

- <30 minutes 30-60 minutes 61-120 minutes 121-180 minutes
 >180 minutes Unknown

**3f. If answered "No" to [3a] then:
Does this hospital have network arrangements with the nearest PICU to transfer critically ill children?**

- Yes No Unknown

Intensive Care Unit (ICU)

4a. Does this hospital have an intensive care unit (ICU)?

- Yes No Unknown

**4b. If answered "Yes" to [4a] then:
How many beds does the ICU have?**

Unknown

**4c. If answered "Yes" to [4a] then:
What is the lowest age limit of patients accepted for stabilisation?**

**4d. If answered "Yes" to [4a] then:
Please provide further information regarding lower age limits:**

**4e. If answered "No" to [4a] then:
Door-to-door, approximately how long does it take using an ambulance blue light to get to the hospital's nearest ICU?**

- <30 minutes 30-60 minutes 61-120 minutes 121-180 minutes
 >180 minutes Unknown

**4f. If answered "No" to [4a] then:
Does this hospital have network arrangements with the nearest ICU to transfer critically ill children?**

- Yes No Unknown

5. Does this hospital have a single point of contact to check critical care bed availability when a child requires transfer?

- Yes No Unknown

6. If a child requires a NON TIME-CRITICAL transfer to a critical care unit in a different hospital, how would they be transferred? (Please tick all that apply)

- A local transport service
- The Regional Paediatric Critical Care Transport Service
- NA - patients are not transferred from this hospital
- Unknown

Please specify any additional options here...

7. If a child requires a TIME-CRITICAL transfer to a critical care unit in a different hospital, how would they be transferred? (Please tick all that apply)

- A local transport service
- In-hospital transport service
- The Regional Paediatric Critical Care Transport Service
- NA - patients are not transferred from this hospital
- Unknown

Please specify any additional options here...

Paediatric critical care outreach teams

1a. Does the hospital have a paediatric critical care outreach team (PCCOT)?

A specialised, multidisciplinary team, typically led by experienced critical care nurses, that extends intensive care expertise to children on general wards

- Yes No Unknown

**1b. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:
If YES, when are they available?**

- 24/7
 Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) 7 days/week
 Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) Monday - Friday
 Unknown

Please specify any additional options here...

Critical care outreach teams

1c. Does the hospital have an adult critical care outreach team (CCOT)?

- Yes No Unknown

**1d. If answered "Yes" to [1c] then:
When are they available?**

- 24/7
 Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) 7 days/week
 Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) Monday - Friday
 Unknown

Please specify any additional options here...

**1e. If answered "Yes" to [1c] then:
Would the CCOT see paediatric patients (16 years old and below) if required?**

- Yes No Unknown
 NA - PCCOT available 24/7

**1f. If answered "Yes" to [1c] then:
Please provide any further information:**

2a. Does this hospital have access for staff to 24/7 rapid review from a critical care outreach team or equivalent whom they can escalate to if they have concerns about a patient?

- Yes No Unknown

**2b. If answered "Yes" to [2a] then:
Is this advertised around this hospital?**

- Yes No Unknown

3a. Does this hospital provide access for patients, parents and carers to 24/7 rapid review from a critical care outreach team or equivalent whom they can contact if they have concerns?

Yes

No

Unknown

**3b. If answered "Yes" to [3a] then:
Is this advertised around this hospital?**

Yes

No

Unknown

4. Do critical care services use a patient administration system (PAS) that is compatible with the rest of the hospital's PAS? (i.e. can critical care clinicians access patient records from another ward in the hospital and vice versa?)

Yes

No

Unknown

1. What training is provided by this hospital that is applicable to stabilisation? (Please tick all that apply)

- None
- Advanced paediatric life support (APLS)
- European paediatric advanced life support (EPLS)
- Adult advanced life support training
- Other simulation training
- Internal continuing professional development (CPD)
- External continuing professional development (CPD)
- Network delivered training
- Level 1 equipment training
- Level 2 equipment training
- Unknown

Please specify any additional options here...

Advanced paediatric life support (APLS)

2a. If answered "Advanced paediatric life support (APLS)" to [1] then:

Is this training provided to all clinicians who may be involved in the stabilisation of the critically ill child?

- Yes No Unknown

**2b. If answered "Advanced paediatric life support (APLS)" to [1] and "Yes" to [2a] then:
Is this training mandatory?**

- Yes No Unknown

**2c. If answered "Advanced paediatric life support (APLS)" to [1] and "Yes" to [2a] and "Yes" to [2b] then:
Is compliance with training monitored?**

- Yes No Unknown

European paediatric advanced life support (EPLS)

3a. If answered "European paediatric advanced life support (EPLS)" to [1] then:

Is this training provided to all clinicians who may be involved in the stabilisation of the critically ill child?

- Yes No Unknown

**3b. If answered "European paediatric advanced life support (EPLS)" to [1] and "Yes" to [3a] then:
Is this training mandatory?**

- Yes No Unknown

**3c. If answered "European paediatric advanced life support (EPLS)" to [1] and "Yes" to [3a] and "Yes" to [3b] then:
Is compliance with training monitored?**

- Yes No Unknown

Adult advanced life support training

4a. If answered "Adult advanced life support training" to [1] then:

Is this training provided to all clinicians who may be involved in the stabilisation of the critically ill child?

- Yes No Unknown

**4b. If answered "Adult advanced life support training" to [1] and "Yes" to [4a] then:
Is this training mandatory?**

- Yes No Unknown

**4c. If answered "Adult advanced life support training" to [1] and "Yes" to [4a] and "Yes" to [4b] then:
Is compliance with training monitored?**

- Yes No Unknown
-

Other simulation training

**5a. If answered "Other simulation training" to [1] then:
Is this training provided to all clinicians who may be involved in the stabilisation of the critically ill child?**

- Yes No Unknown

**5b. If answered "Other simulation training" to [1] and "Yes" to [5a] then:
Is this training mandatory?**

- Yes No Unknown

**5c. If answered "Other simulation training" to [1] and "Yes" to [5a] and "Yes" to [5b] then:
Is compliance with training monitored?**

- Yes No Unknown
-

Internal continuing professional development (CPD)

**6a. If answered "Internal continuing professional development (CPD)" to [1] then:
Is this training provided to all clinicians who may be involved in the stabilisation of the critically ill child?**

- Yes No Unknown

**6b. If answered "Internal continuing professional development (CPD)" to [1] and "Yes" to [6a] then:
Is this training mandatory?**

- Yes No Unknown

**6c. If answered "Internal continuing professional development (CPD)" to [1] and "Yes" to [6a] and "Yes" to [6b] then:
Is compliance with training monitored?**

- Yes No Unknown
-

External continuing professional development (CPD)

**7a. If answered "External continuing professional development (CPD)" to [1] then:
Is this training provided to all clinicians who may be involved in the stabilisation of the critically ill child?**

- Yes No Unknown

**7b. If answered "External continuing professional development (CPD)" to [1] and "Yes" to [7a] then:
Is this training mandatory?**

- Yes No Unknown

**7c. If answered "External continuing professional development (CPD)" to [1] and "Yes" to [7a] and "Yes" to [7b] then:
Is compliance with training monitored?**

- Yes No Unknown
-

Network delivered training

**8a. If answered "Network delivered training" to [1] then:
Is this training provided to all clinicians who may be involved in the stabilisation of the critically ill child?**

- Yes No Unknown

**8b. If answered "Network delivered training" to [1] and "Yes" to [8a] then:
Is this training mandatory?**

- Yes No Unknown

**8c. If answered "Network delivered training" to [1] and "Yes" to [8a] and "Yes" to [8b] then:
Is compliance with training monitored?**

- Yes No Unknown
-

Level 1 equipment training

**9a. If answered "Level 1 equipment training" to [1] then:
Is training provided to all clinicians who may be involved in the stabilisation of the critically ill child?**

- Yes No Unknown

**9b. If answered "Level 1 equipment training" to [1] and "Yes" to [9a] then:
Is this training mandatory?**

- Yes No Unknown

**9c. If answered "Level 1 equipment training" to [1] and "Yes" to [9a] and "Yes" to [9b] then:
Is compliance with training monitored?**

- Yes No Unknown
-

Level 2 equipment training

**10a. If answered "Level 2 equipment training" to [1] then:
Is this training provided to all clinicians who may be involved in the stabilisation of the critically ill child?**

- Yes No Unknown

**10b. If answered "Level 2 equipment training" to [1] and "Yes" to [10a] then:
Is this training mandatory?**

- Yes No Unknown

**10c. If answered "Level 2 equipment training" to [1] and "Yes" to [10a] and "Yes" to [10b] then:
Is compliance with training monitored?**

- Yes No Unknown

Networks of care includes both formal and informal arrangements

Formal network of care: A managed clinical network.

Informal network of care: A collaboration between health professionals and organisations to improve patient care and services, but without specified accountability to commissioning organisations.

1a. Is this hospital part of a formal or informal network of care for paediatric critical care?

- Yes No Unknown

If YES

1b. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:

Is this hospital's patient administration system compatible with other hospitals' patient administration systems within the network of care?

- Yes No Unknown

1c. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:

Is this network:

- Formal Informal Unknown

2. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:

Does the network have established pathways for: (please tick all that apply)

- Advice for the stabilisation of the critically ill child
 Referral for the stabilisation of the critically ill child
 Treatment for the stabilisation of the critically ill child
 None of the above
 Unknown

3. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:

Is this hospital the hub of this network? (e.g. a specialist paediatric centre)

- Yes No Unknown

4. If answered "Yes" to [3] then:

Is paediatric critical care training provided to non-specialist staff from other hospitals in your network who may be involved in stabilising the critically ill child? (e.g. study days or outreach sessions)

- Yes No Unknown

1. Do clinicians working in this hospital have access to a protocol/guideline for children on: (Please tick all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fluid resuscitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Sepsis | <input type="checkbox"/> Airway management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shock | <input type="checkbox"/> Major haemorrhage | <input type="checkbox"/> Induction of anaesthesia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intubation | <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above | <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown |

2. Is there a protocol or guideline which specifies a criteria for admission to critical care for children?

- Yes No Unknown

3a. Are early warning scores used to escalate care?

- Yes No Unknown

3b. If answered "Yes" to [3a] then: What scores are used?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> NPEWS | <input type="checkbox"/> Local early warning score - paediatric |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local early warning score - adult | <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown |

3c. If answered "Yes" to [3a] then: If YES, is this:

- Electronic Paper Unknown

Please specify any additional options here...

3d. If answered "Yes" to [3a] then:

If an early warning score indicates critical deterioration, is critical outreach team review triggered?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Yes | <input type="radio"/> No |
| <input type="radio"/> Unknown | <input type="radio"/> NA - no critical outreach team on site |

3e. If answered "Yes" to [3a] and "NA - no critical outreach team on site" to [3d] then: If NA - no critical care outreach team on site, would it trigger a telephone call for advice with critical care?

- Yes No Unknown

4. Is a paediatric anaesthetist (ST3+) available on site 24/7?

- Yes No Unknown

Investigations

1a. Does this hospital provide access to: (Please tick all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> X-ray | <input type="checkbox"/> CT scan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MRI | <input type="checkbox"/> Ultrasound |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paediatric interventional radiology | <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown | |

X-ray

**1b. If answered "X-ray" to [1a] then:
If YES to X-ray, when is it available?**

- 24/7
- Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) 7 days/week
- Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) Monday - Friday
- Unknown

Please specify any additional options here...

**1c. If answered "X-ray" to [1a] then:
If YES to X-ray, is this reported 24/7?**

- Yes
 No
 Unknown

CT scan

**1d. If answered "CT scan" to [1a] then:
If YES to CT scan, when is it available?**

- 24/7
- Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) 7 days/week
- Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) Monday - Friday
- Unknown

Please specify any additional options here...

**1e. If answered "CT scan" to [1a] then:
If YES to CT scan, is this reported 24/7?**

- Yes
 No
 Unknown

MRI

**1f. If answered "MRI" to [1a] then:
If YES to MRI, when is it available?**

- 24/7
- Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) 7 days/week
- Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) Monday - Friday
- Unknown

Please specify any additional options here...

**1g. If answered "MRI" to [1a] then:
If YES to MRI, is this reported 24/7?**

- Yes
 No
 Unknown

Ultrasound

**1h. If answered "Ultrasound" to [1a] then:
If YES to ultrasound, when is it available?**

- 24/7
- Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) 7 days/week
- Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) Monday - Friday
- Unknown

Please specify any additional options here...

**1i. If answered "Ultrasound" to [1a] then:
If YES to ultrasound, is this reported 24/7?**

- Yes No Unknown

Paediatric interventional radiology

**1j. If answered "Paediatric interventional radiology" to [1a] then:
If YES to paediatric interventional radiology, when is it available?**

- Yes No Unknown

Please specify any additional options here...

**1k. If answered "Paediatric interventional radiology" to [1a] then:
If YES to paediatric interventional radiology, is this reported 24/7?**

- Yes No Unknown

Physiotherapy

2a. Does this hospital provide access to onsite paediatric respiratory physiotherapy?

- Yes No Unknown

**2b. If answered "Yes" to [2a] then:
When are they available?**

- 24/7
- Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) 7 days/week
- Normal working hours (e.g., 8am - 6pm) Monday - Friday
- Unknown

Please specify any additional options here...

**2c. If answered "No" to [2a] then:
Does this hospital have access to an on-call respiratory physiotherapist?**

- Yes No Unknown

**2d. If answered "Yes" to [2c] then:
Do they have specific paediatric expertise?**

- Yes No Unknown
-

I. Support for patients, families and hospital staff

1a. Following the stabilisation of a critically ill child, are all staff members who were involved in the care provided with a hot debrief?

A hot debrief is defined as a debrief that occurs minutes or hours after the stabilisation event.

- Always Mostly On occasions Never
 Unknown

1b. If answered "Always", "Mostly" or "On occasions" to [1a] then:

Please give any further detail (e.g. by whom and what is their level of training):

2a. Following the stabilisation of a critically ill child, are all staff members who were involved in the care provided with a cold debrief?

A cold debrief is defined as a debrief that occurs days to weeks later.

- Always Mostly On occasions Never
 Unknown

2b. If answered "Always", "Mostly" or "On occasions" to [2a] then:

Please give any further detail (e.g. by whom and what is their level of training):

3. In general, are staff involved in the stabilisation of the critically ill child offered a Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) assessment or support following the incident?

- Yes No Unknown

4. Does this hospital have: (Please tick all that apply)

- Dedicated staff to support families (such as family liaison nurses)
 Printed information about critical care for parent carers and families
 Signposting to charity organisations for parent carers and families
 Signposting to charity organisations for hospital staff
 Unknown

Please specify any additional options here...

5. Does this hospital provide access to a psychologist to support families?

Yes

No

Unknown

1a. Does this hospital audit the care of children who required stabilisation?

- Yes No Unknown

1b. If answered "Yes" to [1a] then:

If YES, are the findings shared across organisations/networks?

- Yes No Unknown
-

2. Have there been any serious untoward incidents related to the stabilisation of critically ill children in this hospital in the last two years?

- Yes No Unknown
-

3a. Are children who required stabilisation discussed on a regular basis? (e.g. at M&M meetings)

- Yes No Unknown

3b. If answered "Yes" to [3a] then:

Are the minutes, or learning, from the meetings shared with all clinicians in the hospital who may be involved in the stabilisation of a critically ill child?

- Yes No Unknown

K. Additional information

1. Please use this space should you wish to provide further details on any of the answers you have provided (please include the question number)

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE

By doing so you have contributed to the dataset that will form the report and recommendations due for release in late 2026.