

The importance of nurse-led home visits in the assessment of children with problematic asthma

Royal Brompton

# Aims

To evaluate and identify potentially modifiable factors in children with problematic asthma by a nurse-led assessment and home visit

# Rationale

* Development Design: Observational cohort study.
* Setting: A tertiary paediatric respiratory centre.
* Patients: 71 children, aged 4.5–17.5 years, with problematic asthma currently under follow-up at a tertiary respiratory centre.
* Interventions: A nurse-led hospital visit followed by a home visit.
* Main outcome measures: Identification and attempted change of exacerbating factors so that further investigations and consideration of off-label, potentially toxic, asthma therapies were not necessary

# Outcomes

Results: Potentially modifiable factors were identified in 56 (79%) children. Many children had multiple causes for poor control. The most important were ongoing allergen exposure, 22 children (31%); passive or active smoking, 18 children (25%); medication issues including adherence,34 children (48%); psychosocial factors, 42 families (59%). The home visit contributed valuable information to this assessment. At the home visit house dust mite avoidance measures were found to be inadequate in 84% of those sensitised; medications were not easily available for inspection or were out of date in 23%; 74% of psychology referrals were made after the home visit. In 39 children (55%) the factors identified and the interventions recommended meant that further escalation of treatment was avoided

Conclusions: Nurse-led assessments including a home visit can help identify potentially modifiable factors for poorly controlled symptoms in children with problematic asthma

# Benefits

A nurse-led home visit is an important part of the evaluation of problematic asthma and can help to identify potentially modifiable causes. An effective treatment plan can help to avoid the need for further investigations and escalation of treatment.

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