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## MANAGEMENT OF PRE-OP ANXIETY IN CHILDREN UNDERGOING ELECTIVE SURGERIES

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Management of pre-op anxiety in children undergoing elective surgeries- A Quality Improvement Project. A Amrita (MTI), Agrawal A (Consultant), House K(ST6), Jhingan M(MTI)- Luton & Dunstable University Hospital, Bedfordshire NHS Foundation trust

### BACKGROUND

Approximately 50-75% of the paediatric patients develop pre-operative anxiety. Stress related anxiety can lead to high levels of cortisol and epinephrine in the body leading to multiple complications like fear, infection and poor post-operative recovery.

Most common interventions practiced reducing anxiety include- sedative premedication, parental presence, and behavioural training programmes before surgery.

### PROBLEM

No anxiety scoring system is in place at present to measure pre- op anxiety levels in our trust, so we performed a Quality Improvement Project on the guidelines currently being practised for managing paediatric anxiety. A questionnaire was formulated for parents involving their anxiety levels and concerns before surgery, familiarity with hospital environment, previous anaesthetics, their level of understanding regarding fasting guidelines and anaesthetic plan, and their satisfaction levels with present anaesthetic care. A short questionnaire was also designed for children aged 3-12 years involving similar set of questions. Paper survey done on 30 children and 30 parents revealed 63% children were anxious with 47% were fear of needles and pain, more than 95% satisfaction rates with anaesthetic care in both groups. 25 % of parents suggested for further scope of improvement.

### STRATEGY FOR CHANGE

- Modified version of mYPAS scoring system, to be added on the anaesthetic chart for routine use.
- Plan to provide RCOA launched comic strip during pre-op visit. It adds an element of fun and play and helps child to understand the plan of general anaesthetics well.
- Introduction of projector-based (cartoon films) play therapy in the theatres as well.

### MEASURES OF IMPROVEMENT

☐ Assessment of anxiety scores during pre-op visit, on the day of surgery and in theatres. (Appendix 1)

- ☒ Introduction of play therapy in addition to oral midazolam and behavioural therapy in theatres in children &gt;6 scores on the day of surgery.
- ☒ Feedback from the parents and children during the post- operative period.
- ☒ Audit in six months.

### **LESSONS LEARNT**

Our current guidelines match the standards of good medical practice. However, the new management strategies can improve the quality of care we provide.

### **MESSAGE FOR OTHERS**

Paediatric anxiety is one of the major concerning factors for short- and long-term adverse consequences, thus need active management.

### **References**

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