

# Transforming community health services for children and young people who are ill: a quasi-experimental evaluation

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## Plain English summary

### Transforming health services for children and young people

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## Plain English summary

There is a national movement to deliver more health care outside hospitals and in community settings. Children's community nursing (CCN) teams can help to achieve this for children with short- and long-term illnesses. We worked in five sites that had recently started CCN services or were planning to do so. We tried to understand:

- whether or not the services could affect how much hospitals are used, by exploring local statistics before and after the CCN teams started work
- the costs of these services, by gathering information from the teams and using the local statistics to put a cost on hospital activity
- parents' views of CCN services for their child, by talking to them about their experiences and whether or not these changed over time.

We found a mixed pattern of change in hospital activity. Sites where children's use of hospitals was higher than national rates seemed more likely to see a reduction after CCN services started. Some types of team seemed to reduce how often children with complex needs went into hospital and how long they stayed. In terms of hospital use, none of the services saved more money than it cost, but we did not assess the value of all the other things the CCN teams did, for example running clinics in the community. Parents valued CCN service input as it helped them manage their child's health needs at home. These positive experiences relied less on how much support teams offered, and more on what type of support was offered and when.

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