

OTITIS MEDIA WITH EFFUSION: A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

An evaluation of the effectiveness of written information in improving knowledge and understanding of parents with hearing impaired children

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Abstract

The purpose of this small scale research study was to determine whether providing families with information leaflets on otitis media with effusion (glue ear) actually increased their understanding of their child's condition or not.

A questionnaire was selected as the data research instrument. The sample population consisted of 50 families that were randomly selected from the county, in which the researcher is employed. 25 families (Group A) received the NDCS leaflet about glue ear and 25 families (Group B) acted as a control group and did not receive a leaflet. All 50 families were sent a postal questionnaire.

The results indicate that receiving an information leaflet did not appear to make any significant difference to the awareness, knowledge and understanding of the parents concerned. This led the researcher to explore the reasons why this was the case.

Further analysis identified the need for health professionals to fully understand the coping strategies that parents utilise following the diagnosis of their child's deafness. The conclusion reached, was that however well constructed an information leaflet is, it may not overcome the psychological barriers that parents are experiencing, in coping with the fact that they have a child with a significant disability.

Future research is needed to explore methods of providing optimum education and support to enable parents to reach a stage of acceptance, regarding their child's hearing impairment, and work in partnership with health professionals and educationalists to meet their child's needs.