

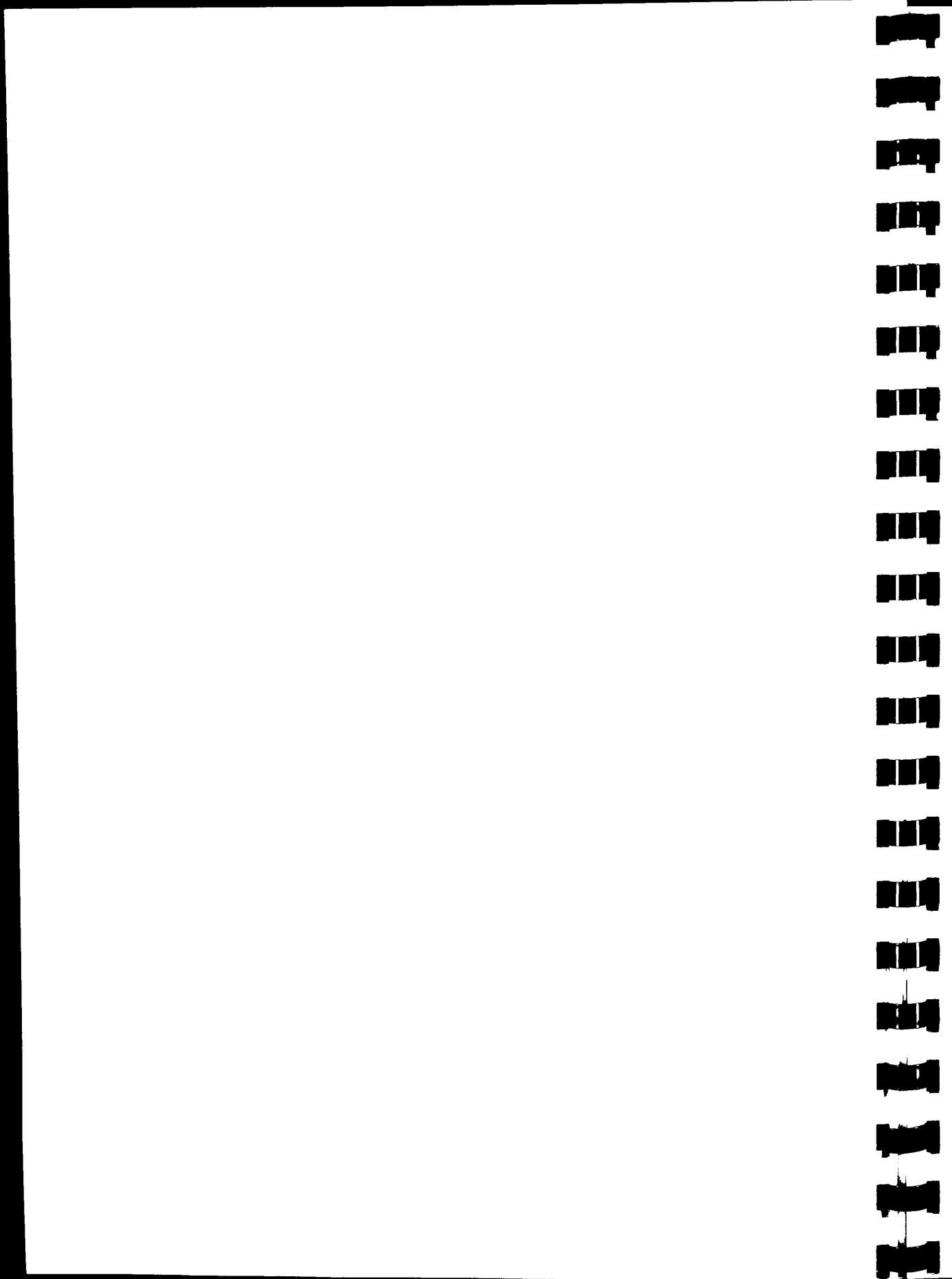
**INFORMATION ON  
OBTAINING THE VIEWS  
OF CHILDREN**

***CONSUMER FEEDBACK  
RESOURCE***

<b>KING'S FUND LIBRARY</b> 11-13 Cavendish Square London W1M 0AN	
Class mark HU	Extensions Kin
Date of Receipt 6 Aug 2001	Price Donation



**INFORMATION ON  
OBTAINING THE VIEWS  
OF CHILDREN**



## ***CONTENTS***

Introduction	1
Useful Reading References	2
Current Projects	4
Organisation Contact List	5
Areas for Questions	6

100

101

102

103

104

105

106

107

108

109

110

111

112

113

114

115

116

117

118

119

120

## **INTRODUCTION**

These information sheets will be of use to health service staff or Community Health Councils who wish to find out the views of children whether they are using acute services, community services or services for children with special needs.

The purpose of these sheets is:

- 1 to give some useful reading references for this field
- 2 to give details of some of the current major projects
- 3 to list some organisations which may be able to carry out research
- 4 to provide a checklist of what appear to be the most important areas for questions to ask children.

Information on the use of feedback methods is available separately, and is also provided in full detail in McIver S. Obtaining the Views of Users of Health Services. London: King's Fund Centre, 1991.

Details of any type of consumer feedback project using survey or non-survey methods are welcomed by the Consumer Feedback Resource so that we can develop the advice on children's services. Please send information to:

Shirley McIver  
Consumer Feedback Resource  
King's Fund Centre  
126 Albert Street  
London  
NW1 7NF  
Tel: 071-267 6111

July 1991

## **USEFUL READING REFERENCES**

The texts in this list are chosen because they cover issues that arise in consumer feedback or quality improvement in services for children.

None of the publications below has been formally evaluated but provide a guide to what is available.

King's Fund Centre publications can be obtained from Bailey Distribution Limited, Learoyd Road, Mountfield Industrial Estate, New Romney, Kent, TN28 8XU or to personal callers only from The Bookshop, The King's Fund Centre, 126 Albert Street, London, NW1 7NF.

The King's Fund Centre has a reference library which holds many of the publications mentioned. Photocopies of journal articles ONLY (not books or reports) can be supplied at 20 pence a page plus postage and packing. However you are advised to try your local library first.

NAWCH (National Association for the Welfare of Children in Hospital) has an excellent reference library and information service which holds material on the needs of sick children whether in hospital or at home.

NAWCH also publishes a regular newsletter presenting parents' views, giving updates on quality initiatives in children's services and details of the latest publications about children's services.

NAWCH. Setting Standards for Adolescents in Hospital. London: NAWCH, 1991.

This book forms part of the Quality Review Series and contains a section on involving users which includes a checklist.

Christine Hogg, NAWCH Quality Review Setting Standards for Children in Health Care. London: NAWCH, 1989.

The aim of this review is to draw up a profile of existing services for children; to widen understanding of what 'quality' means in children's services and to help communication between all staff in contact with children. The review includes a charter; checklists for inpatient services, outpatient clinics, accident and emergency departments, diagnostic and support services; paediatric services in the community; and sample questionnaires.

Rosemary Thornes on behalf of Caring for Children in the Health Services. Just for the Day: Children admitted to hospital for day treatment. London: NAWCH, 1991.

This report of an enquiry into day surgery for children recommends good practice for the care of children admitted for day surgery. It includes examples of information for patients and parents and a checklist based on 12 quality standards.



Health Advisory Service. Bridges over troubled waters: a report from the NHS Health Advisory Service on services for disturbed adolescents. London: HMSO, 1986.

This report describes the stages of the project Bridges over Troubled Waters which was undertaken by the Health Advisory Service to assess services for disturbed adolescents. The report includes 107 specific recommendations concerned with more constructive collaboration and other recommendations for the many professional groups involved in providing services. Some ethical and legal aspects are also addressed.

Ayer S. Community Care: Failure of professionals to meet family needs. *Child: care, health and development* 1984;10:127-140.

This paper describes interviews with 132 mothers of children with severe mental handicaps. The main findings of the survey are that mothers need more information about available services and services determined by their needs rather than the professional viewpoint.

Eiser C. Chronic Childhood Disease: An introduction to theory and psychological research. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Mayall B. Keeping Children Healthy. London: Allen and Unwin, 1986.

This book includes descriptions of parents' and children's experiences of community services such as health visiting.

Cooper A, Harpin V (eds). This is Our Child: How parents experience the medical world. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Parents' own stories about their experiences of using the health service.

Alderson P. Choosing for Children: Parents consent to surgery. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Parents' experiences of their involvement in consent to operations are described and suggestions for improvements put forward.

Krementz J. How it Feels to Fight for your Life. London: Victor Gollantz, 1990.

Accounts of their experiences in hospital are described by children undergoing treatments such as kidney dialysis. Their stories illustrate how children who understand the treatment they are being given are co-operative.

## **CURRENT PROJECTS**

This project is funded to develop good practice in the field of consumer feedback or quality improvement in children's services.

Priscilla Alderson PhD  
Research Sociologist  
14 Holyoake Terrace  
Sevenoaks  
Kent  
TN13 1PA

This project has been undertaken to explore the subject of children's consent to surgery. Semi-structured interviews have been used to talk to 120 children aged 8-15 years in four hospitals. Staff and parents have also been interviewed. The project aims to find out children's understanding of medical information; how wise decisions are made; at what time children are able to make decisions and how their ability develops.

## **ORGANISATION CONTACT LIST**

This organisation offers advice and assistance to those seeking to obtain information from children. This list is not comprehensive and inclusion does not imply endorsement by the King's Fund Centre.

NAWCH (National Association for the Welfare of Children in Hospital)

Argyle House  
29-31 Euston Road  
London  
NW1 2SD

Tel: 071-833 2041

## **AREAS FOR QUESTIONS**

This list contains suggestions for areas which could be covered in a survey to obtain the views of children. The list has been compiled from previous research into the views of children but it is not intended to be exhaustive.

Children are rarely asked for their views on what it was like to use a service, yet they are perfectly capable of describing experiences. However, the age of the child is an important factor which will influence the approach.

At seven-years-old and below children are distressed by any separation from parents or normal home life and have little understanding of what is happening to them. This means that it is usually necessary to use a trained child psychologist, and it is probably more convenient to interview the parents or get the parents to ask the child questions.

From the age of eight most children are willing to give their views, although questionnaires will have to be made interesting and attractive, as well as easy to understand. One way of approaching the subject is to construct an activity booklet for the child to read and complete. This can include games and information as well as questions about their stay and space to write or draw pictures about their experiences. Play leaders already engage children in these kinds of activities and would be able to design a children's activity booklet or pack with the aim of eliciting information about a child's use of a service.

Similarly, surveys of children and young people suffering from mental distress have showed that these groups can also be asked for their views. Creative methods such as story-telling combined with interviews can be used for children up to twelve and questions or structured interviews for adolescents, though they may prefer to 'have their say' in less formalised ways.

## **ORGANISATION OF SERVICES**

- Are pre-admission visits offered to children coming to hospital to reduce anxiety?
- How long do children have to wait at clinics or on wards for admission procedures to be completed and what is done to alleviate boredom/anxiety during the wait?
- Are parents involved in caring for their child, e.g. washing and feeding?
- Are ward routines close to the child's home routine to minimise disturbance?
- Are brothers and sisters made to feel welcome visitors?
- Are operations and procedures organised to reduce children's anxiety, e.g. parents accompany child while the anaesthetic is administered?
- Are diagnostic tests arranged on the same day as outpatient appointments?
- Is food available on inpatient menus and at other premises where children use services which children will eat?
- Are communications between different services co-ordinated (particularly in community services) to ensure that children receive a seamless service from the different professional groups with which they come into contact?

## **ENVIRONMENT AND FACILITIES PROVIDED FOR CHILDREN**

- Is the environment appropriate for children of different ages in terms of play facilities, toys available and decoration?
- Are facilities provided for parents to stay, e.g. washing, eating and sleeping. Are the facilities near to the ward so parents can be near their child. Is information given to parents about the facilities before they come to the hospital?
- Are standards of safety for the environment appropriate for children?
- Is the privacy of children protected in all areas, e.g. accident and emergency, outpatients, inpatients, community premises?
- Are toilets big enough for parents to go in with children to help them, particularly disabled children?

## **INFORMATION**

- Is information given appropriate for parents and children?
- Is information given about treatment sufficient; is it understandable and are parents clear about what is going to happen next?
- Is the information given about discharge appropriate, has the general practitioner been informed, and has enough information been given about follow-up visits?

## **STAFF ATTITUDE**

- Do children and parents know who staff are?
- Do parents have enough time to ask questions?

## **ACCESS**

- Do parents have any problems getting to the hospital or community premises with children and prams?

## **TYPE OF USER**

- Children of different age groups have different needs and expectations. An example of the categories used in surveys is 0-12 months, 1-2 years, 3-5, 6-7, 8-10, 11-14 and over 14 years.
- Has the child used the service before? This will affect their view of the service.



King's Fund



54001000964430



2 020000 048572 C

The King's Fund Centre is a health services development agency which promotes improvements in health and social care. We do this by working with people in health services, in social services, in voluntary agencies, and with the users of their services. We encourage people to try out new ideas, provide financial or practical support to new developments, and enable experiences to be shared through workshops, conferences and publications. Our aim is to ensure that good developments in health and social care are widely taken up.