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Home Treatment for Adolescents Potentially in Need of Inpatient Treatment, Audit of Effectiveness, and the Necessity of Engagement with the Service User.

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Introduction

Home Treatment is a relatively new concept in adolescent psychiatry. A shortage of beds in the UK, as well as the high cost of admission, has driven service innovation. Bedfordshire, which has no local inpatient unit, has developed a county wide Home Treatment Team to keep young people at home as much as possible. Engagement with service users is key to the aims of this service. Understanding the young person in their context is vital in this process.

Aims/Objectives

To show that Home Treatment is clinically and cost effective. To show how engagement is achieved.

Methods

All young people presenting as high risk, or in crisis at A&E or other venues are seen by the team. An audit of estimated reduction of hospital admissions was done, combined with a naturalistic study of young people's and their families' appreciation and understanding of the process. An outline of the teams understanding of engagement is given.

Results

In-patient admissions were reduced, at considerable cost saving. Young people and their families found the service helpful, and were very happy with the level of support.

Conclusions

Home Treatment is a safe and effective way of dealing with young people otherwise likely to need inpatient care. Engagement must include family or other carers, and close liaison with education and social services is essential.