Paediatric Retrieval Training using the Mobile Clinical Skills Unit

Introducing Intensive Care for Critically Ill or Injured Children
The Scottish Paediatric Intensive Care Retrieval Service is a mobile care service providing care to critically ill or injured children wherever they are in Scotland. Two Scottish Paediatric Intensive Care Units (PICU), based at the Royal Hospitals for Sick Children in Edinburgh and Glasgow, support the Paediatric Retrieval Service. Specialist doctors and nurses from the two PICUs travel throughout Scotland ensuring seriously ill or injured children can receive the specialist care needed during their retrieval and transfer.

In 2009, the Scottish National Paediatric Retrieval Service (SNPRS) linked up with the Clinical Skills Mobile Unit, managed by the Clinical Skills Managed Educational Network and funded by NES. The programme of visits being made by the Unit throughout remote and rural Scotland provided an opportunity to deliver paediatric retrieval training to local healthcare professionals to deal with emergencies prior to the arrival of a PICU team.

The SNPRS faced a number of challenges prior to having access to the Unit, which included:
- using inappropriate settings for training, such as a ward surrounded by patients
- transporting the educational equipment – weighing over 100 kg
- recruiting enough participants to justify the time invested in providing the training.
The introduction of the Unit to support the delivery of education to NHS staff caring for critically ill children was welcomed by the PICU team. They saw this approach as beneficial in many ways:

- There is no need for the trainers to transport the equipment which is very expensive, quite bulky and very fragile as the Unit is fitted out with all the equipment required, including a SimBaby and video de-briefing system.
- The Unit can hold up to 14 people at any one time. The two pods extend to become a simulation healthcare training area - a productive environment for learning.
- The publicity provided by the Unit is used to encourage people to attend.

Sharing the Training Experience and contributing to Healthcare Improvement and Safety

A consultant based in the PICU at Edinburgh’s Royal Hospital for Sick Children, who is also a trainer in Paediatric Retrieval Training, shared his learning from delivering the course ‘Care of the critically ill child at presentation’ in conjunction with the Unit. Their challenge was how best to deliver significant clinical skills training to staff outwith commuting distances of Edinburgh and Glasgow.

"It was a marriage made in virtual heaven. They had a fantastic facility and were looking for people to do training and we had great training but nowhere to do it. So we seamlessly started delivering training in 2009 using the mobile skills unit."

Consultant, Edinburgh Royal Hospital for Sick Children, Edinburgh
Participants have responded positively to this learning approach. The following statements from those who attended the training reflect how well both the Unit and the training were received:

“Very enjoyable way of learning, relaxed supportive environment. I now feel much more confident in dealing with a sick child scenario - a very good learning tool.”
GP, Fort William Health Centre

“e-learning wouldn’t work as there are a lot of technical skills involved for which the SimBaby is required and is the only medium.”

“Normally we would give three or four 15 minute lectures at the start of the day. We are now looking to deliver this through an e-learning medium, so that will release another hour for giving hands on simulation training such as showing how to put an IV in a baby, or drawing up a drug... In summary we are maximising the realism for everyone.”
PICU Consultant

---

1,2 Extracts from report on the ‘Pilot of the mobile clinical skills unit: evaluation of the first six months’ (For NES Programme Board, 28 September 2009).
Putting Training into Practice, Delivering Safer Care

Even though staff may still feel anxious when presented with a seriously ill child, after the training they are more likely to feel more confident and able to deal with the situation. This is because the training takes place in a simulated environment which reflects the participants’ own ward setting and roles they are familiar with.

The Unit enables the multidisciplinary team, including doctors, nurses, GPs, midwives, and paramedics to rehearse scenarios together with minimal disruption to the service they provide. These teams represent the likely working teams in the trainees’ own environment. A major benefit of this method of training for both NHS staff based in rural areas and for the PICU teams from the Royal Hospitals for Sick Children in Glasgow and Edinburgh are the personal contacts made that then enable effective referrals.

Informal networking takes place with the Scottish Ambulance Service, nurses, doctors and health visitors, etc., working in remote and rural areas. So when we discuss an ill child there is an established critical care network which facilitates positive outcomes.

PICU Consultant

These days have been very successful as the team have been able to deliver the same course locally around Scotland, and have got to know the Unit and equipment well to enable them to use it to its full potential. A side-effect of this is that the local trainers have the opportunity to see the full potential of the equipment. The trainers’ time and travel is funded by NHS NSS, to enable the delivery of education required to support the retrieval service.2

For further information see:
http://www.csmen.scot.nhs.uk/projects/index.htm
http://www.snprs.scot.nhs.uk/

2 Comment from the Mobile Skills Unit.