This work has been submitted to NECTAR, the Northampton Electronic Collection of Theses and Research.

Conference or Workshop Item

**Title:** Parent and healthcare professional use of language: a literature review

**Creators:** Burrows, M., Neill, S., Redwood, T., Corr, S. and Lakhanpaul, M.


**Version:** Presented version

[http://nectar.northampton.ac.uk/4517/]
Parent and healthcare professional use of language: a literature review
Michael Burrows\textsuperscript{a}, Dr Sarah Neill\textsuperscript{a}, Dr Tracy Redwood\textsuperscript{a}, Prof. Susan Corr\textsuperscript{a} and Prof. Monica Lakhanpaul\textsuperscript{b}

\textsuperscript{a}University of Northampton \textsuperscript{b}University College London

\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{Introduction} & \textbf{Method} \\
\hline
**Aims** & **Population** Parents, carers or guardians with children (up to adolescence) \\
• To understand existing research examining parental and HCP use of language; what does the research show? & **Setting** Literature reporting on data collected from both GP surgeries and A&Es were included \\
• To understand the limits of current research and provide context for further research. & **Condition** Literature covering acute illness were included. Those which cover communication in serious or chronic illnesses were not, as parents are likely to have different communication experiences. \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

**Findings**
Patients have difficulty with medical terminology or information, ranging from medical terms, organ location, cancer and asthma vernacular. These findings are mirrored in research with parents, however studies are rare.

• Gittleman (2004) found that parents (n=122) could not define meningitis (70%), lethargy (64%) and virus (40%) correctly. Parents appeared to have general information, but lack depth.

• Other studies (Michel 2006; Cane 2004) have shown less than 50% (n=139) concordance between parents and HCP for definitions of wheeze and most parents definitions did not map onto epidemiological definitions.

• Kai (1996) showed that parents felt they received too little information about their child’s illness. They saw the terms virus and bug as confusing, vague and a catchall diagnosis, in turn causing anxiety over reassurance.

• Parents have been shown to have difficulties in understanding information presented in A&E. (Cramm and Dowd, 2008; Waisman et al, 2003; Chappy et al, 2012). One-fifth of parents did not understand information provided to them and understanding was effected by the perception of pain in their child.

The literature review showed a disparity between HCP and parental use of language.

**Discussion**
• Overall there was a lack of previous research and what exists shows a disparity between HCP and parents use of language

• Current research doesn’t examine acute illness nor how these differences effect parents and child health.

• Most research reviewed was quantitative and therefore limited in scope and exploratory capacity.

• This review highlights the need for further in-depth qualitative study to fully explore this topic.

\begin{tabular}{|l|l|}
\hline
\textbf{References} & \\
\hline
\hline
\end{tabular}

e-mail: michael.burrows@northampton.ac.uk