



Better at Home Campaign and the Parents Charter

Information for Parents

What is the Better At Home Campaign?

Better at Home is a new campaign being run jointly by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) and WellChild. The main focus of the Campaign is to raise awareness of the many children and young people who remain in hospital for long periods of time when their ongoing care could be better and more cost effectively provided at home. The Campaign calls for:

- high quality and effective care to be delivered in the home where possible
- packages of care which coordinate health, social care and education, meeting the needs of the child and their families
- the governments commitment to support greater investment in the provision of children's nurses to bridge the gap between hospital and community services

The first stage of the Campaign has focussed on England and so far the statistics show that over 200 children and young people are currently in hospital for more than three months. Earlier this year a Parliamentary reception was held in London to officially launch the Campaign and 83 MPs have signed a motion in support of what we are trying to do.

The Campaign is now being extended into Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Why a Parents Charter?

From the very beginning families have been at the heart of the Campaign. It is so important to continue to raise awareness of your experiences – both good and not so good – and this Charter will highlight what you as parents need to help you care for your child at home. The idea is to produce a short document detailing approximately ten statements which illustrate the most important things that you feel are essential when your child is being cared for at home. To give you some idea of what we are trying to do, I have enclosed the 'Action for Sick Children Millennium Charter' as an example.

How we want parents to be involved

To make this happen we need as many parents as possible to be involved. Ideally we would like two groups of parents – one to be part of an editorial panel who will oversee the process and help pull everything together and one group who will contribute their thoughts and ideas to the Charter. It is so important that parents are involved at every step of the way – it is your Charter!

We appreciate that you might want to be involved but feel that you do not have time. However in order to make this as easy as possible all contact with you will be mainly by telephone and email.

We hope to launch the Charter as part of the Campaign in mid 2010 and hope that you will want to be part of this exciting initiative.

If you have any queries about taking part or just want to know more then please contact:

Helen Eke
Family Networks Coordinator, WellChild
heleneke@wellchild.org.uk
01242 530007

- Please provide any other information you would like to share with us

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Thank you.



The Action for Sick Children Millennium Charter

1.

All children shall have equal access to the best clinical care within a network of services that collaborate with each other

2.

Health services for children and young peoples should be provided in a child centred environment separately from adults so that they are made to feel welcome, safe and secure at all times.

3.

Parents should be empowered to participate in decisions regarding the treatment and care of their child through a process of clear communication and adequate support.

4.

Children should be informed and involved to an extent appropriate to their development and understanding

5.

Children should be cared for at home with the support and practical assistance of community children's nursing services, unless the care that they require can only be provided in hospital

6.

All staff caring for children shall be specifically trained to understand and respond to their clinical, emotional, developmental and cultural needs

7.

Every hospital admitting children should provide overnight accommodation for parents, free of charge

8.

Parents should be encouraged and supported to participate in the care of their child when they are sick

9.

Every child in hospital shall have full opportunity for play, recreation and education

10.

Adolescents will be recognized as having different needs to those of younger children and adults. Health services should therefore be readily available to meet their particular needs