

Practice MRI – Evaluating an Educational Play Therapy Intervention in the Practice MRI Unit of The Royal Children’s Hospital Melbourne

Leanne Hallowell – Masters Thesis - 2008

ABSTRACT

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) is a common investigation performed on young children who are required to keep still for up to 60 minutes for the study to be performed successfully. Paediatric patients often find the confined space, noise, need to lie still and potential for intravenous contrast, anxiety provoking and which may be so distressing that they are unable to cope. General anaesthesia (GA) is then required to ensure diagnostic images are achieved.

It was believed by staff in the Departments of Educational Play Therapy and Medical Imaging at The Royal Children’s Hospital in Melbourne, that an intervention which supported children to develop understandings of the MRI process and appropriate coping strategies would allow more children to undergo MRI without the need for a GA. With this in mind, a practice MRI intervention, conducted by Educational Play Therapists was developed. The intervention was carried out in a practice MRI unit, a shell of an MRI, devoid of magnets.

This study was to review if gender, age, time between practice and clinical MRI, time of day the clinical MRI occurs or the child’s position in the MRI unit, would impact a child’s ability to cope with the rigors of a practice MRI and go onto achieve diagnostic scans in a clinical MRI scan. Data was analysed by quantitative methodologies.

Participants totalled 291(*N*), mean age 7.9 years. 240 (82.5%) were considered a pass at practice and 226 (90.8%) of those who went on to a clinical intervention were able to obtain diagnostic images at clinical MRI.

None of the hypotheses was confirmed, but this is in itself interesting. The discussion suggests possible reasons for the non-confirmation of the hypotheses and proposes further areas for quantitative and qualitative research.

Contact

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