

PN-5

Like being in another world

Parents' experiences of their child being admitted to a pediatric intensive care unit: a qualitative study

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Background: There is very little research on the parent's experiences of having a child admitted to a pediatric intensive care unit (PICU). Identifying and describing "such experiences could facilitate better parental support from the PICU team and help the parents manage a stressful situation.

Aims: This study aims to describe parents' experiences of having their child admitted to a pediatric intensive care unit.

Methods: Interviews were conducted with 12 parents whose children had been admitted to a PICU. A qualitative design was used and the interviews were analyzed based on content analysis. □

Findings: The analysis revealed two categories: "being involved" and "being informed" with seven sub-categories: "caring for the parents", "security and trust", "altering the parental role" "stress and fear", "the importance of knowing", "interaction in the care process" and "being prepared"). An overarching theme emerged: the experience was that of "being in another world". The study concludes that a child's PICU admission is a stressful situation, and for the parents to be able to handle the anxiety and stress they needed to be informed of and involved in their child's care.

Conclusions:

The parents' experience when their child is admitted to a PICU is fraught with a range of emotion and fear. There are indications that things such as good information, involvement and a positive experience of the transfer to the pediatric ward reduce the stress and anxiety associated with PICU admission. The result of this study could be used as basis for a post-PICU follow-up service for the children and their families.