

Jo Saywell, Joanne Turvey, Chloe Clarridge, Vicky Elliott.
Paediatric Cardiac intensive care unit, Leicester. U.K

Background:

In the COVID 19 pandemic in UK specialist paediatric intensive care unit were closed and staff redeployed to adult intensive care services¹. These measures were put in place to meet the extraordinary demands that adult ITU services faced nationally. Healthcare professionals suddenly cared for acutely ill adult with a novel illness for which there was limited knowledge. The pressures that PICU staff faced was immense.

Aim:

The aim of this survey study was to understand the impact of working on adult ITU on healthcare professionals working in a PICU that was transformed into an adult ITU.

Results

- Free text responses to questions in survey were analysed using thematic analysis². Themes illustrated that five key themes were central to staff experiences' of working adult ITU in COVID 19.

“Most of my anger is directed towards members of the team (nursing and medical) who didn't come and help with the covid patients”

“No thanks for our efforts, just generic hospital wide praise & badges”

“After the 2nd closure I didn't like my job or the people I worked with. I felt low and hated coming to work. I even considered leaving at one point.”

“[Senior staff need to] Be more understanding of what staff have gone through during both covid waves, the physical, emotional and psychological impact it has had on many of staff lives”

Method:

- Cross sectional survey design
- Open to all healthcare professionals working on PICU
- Recruited through staff social media groups and on the unit
- Online anonymous survey

Sample:

31 PICU healthcare professionals include junior medical & nursing staff, allied health professionals, senior medical staff and senior nursing staff.

Themes

Importance of Teamwork

Importance of good leadership

COVID 19 Lessons learned

Importance of clear communication to all

Long term support is needed for PICU staff

References

- Sinha R, Aramburo A, Deep A, et al. Caring for critically ill adults in paediatric intensive care units in England during the COVID-19 pandemic: planning, implementation and lessons for the future. Archives of Disease in Childhood 2021;106(6):548. doi: 10.1136/archdischild-2020-320962
- Braun V, Clarke V. Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative research in psychology 2006;3(2):77-101.

Many thanks to Isabelle Butcher, for her advice & support with this project

Future recommendations

- Clear communication and teamwork must be modelled by senior staff on PICIU particularly when changes are occurring on the uni.
- PICU staff need to have access to adequate clinical psychological support to ensure long term support is available.