

Advacacy

Foster Care Program Optimizes Health Outcomes

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics and Healthy Foster Care America, approximately 800,000 children spend some time in foster care each year. The average length of stay often extends to 33 months. Nearly 25 percent of children in foster care will have more than three home placements. The MUSC Foster Care Support Clinic (FCSC) collaborates with the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) to provide medical services to high risk children in the foster care system throughout the area.

The FCSC's Tracy W. Halasz, Certified Pediatric Nurse Practitioner, works with Machel Green, Human Service Coordinator, and the MUSC General Pediatric Attending Physicians to provide care and coordination to foster children in an outpatient setting. As of June 2013, 321 children were enrolled in FCSC, and enrollment is steadily expanding. One of Halasz's goals in the coming years involves increasing availability of adequate medical, mental health and developmental care to foster care children and families in order to provide continuity for this patient population, as well as optimize health outcomes and decrease hospitalizations. Halasz has been working to promote the FCSC in the area, as well across the state, and was recently asked to participate in the South Carolina Foster Care Health Advisory Committee to help champion a system of care that assures children in the foster care system of South Carolina have timely access and are provided the highest standard of medical and mental health care available.

Magnets Reduce Emergency Room Visits by 50 Percent

Bonnie Rab, ADN, RN, obtained a grant and developed refrigerator magnets that were distributed to parents of children with epilepsy. The magnet was intended to be a quick reference to help parents manage their child's diagnosis and seizures since the educational tools distributed in clinic visits were often lost or discarded. The magnets were successful in achieving a 50 percent reduction of total emergency room visits.

RESULTS

- Parent Survey (see figure 2):**
- 532 responses
 - 95% reported Seizure Management Magnet was helpful

- ED Visits (see figure 3):**
- 50% reduction in total ED visits for seizures in children
 - 58% reduction in ED visits for seizures in children that did not lead to inpatient admission
 - Average total ED visits for seizures per child dropped from 1.06 to 0.53 after intervention

Figure 2. Parent responses to Seizure Management Magnet Efficacy Survey

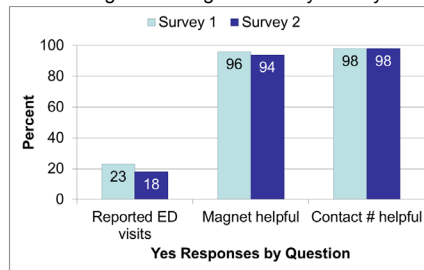


Figure 1. First Aid Seizure Magnet

First Aid for Seizures

- Signs of a seizure: shaking of arms, legs or whole body, blank staring, confused speech
- Place child on their side; remove any hard objects that could harm your child.
- Speak calmly to your child
- Time the Seizure

When to call 911

- If the seizure lasts longer than 5 minutes
- If your child has multiple seizures
- If seizures do not stop after giving emergency medication

Important Phone Numbers

- 843-792-3307 - Monday through Friday 8:30 am-4pm
- 843-792-2123 - After hours (Ask to speak to the pediatric neurology resident on call)

Figure 3. Comparison of Frequency of ED Visits before and after Seizure Management Magnet Distribution

