

Not For Play, Keep Them Away

Year Four August 2016 – July 2017

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This paper follows on from the previous “Not for Play” evaluation reports. It provides an update on the findings of the delivery, outputs and outcomes of the fourth year of the “Not for Play” programme from August 2016, to July 2017. The short report highlights useful information regarding insight into risks and behaviours of families across NHS GGC as well as recommending future actions.

1.2 Not for play, keep them away

“Not for Play” aims to provide every parent/carer in NHS GGC, who has a baby at 12–16 weeks of age, with a small resource pack and information. This is delivered during a brief discussion about keeping children safe from liquid laundry pods or tabs, also known as liquitabs or laundry pods, and other household cleaning products. Parents/carers are encouraged by Health Visitors, or other team members, to fit the cupboard catch in the kitchen to help prevent access to liquid laundry pods/ tabs and other household cleaning products, or, to move liquid laundry pods/ tabs into a storage area that is not accessible by children.

2. Evaluation Returns

2.1 Distribution

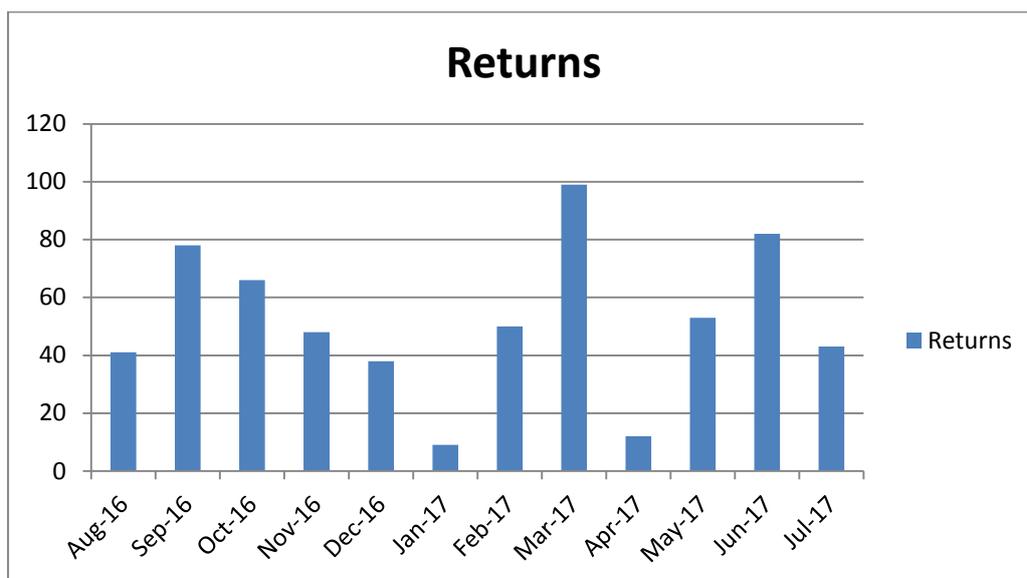
Children and Families teams who distributed the “Not for Play” resources asked families to complete the evaluation questionnaires at the point of

distribution. A total of 619 evaluation forms were completed and provide the information contained in this report.

Graph 1, shows the number of evaluation form returns made per month and this varied across the year.

In comparison to Year three, where a total of 624 evaluation returns were made, there has been a slight decrease with 619 evaluation forms received. This does not necessarily mean that the packs are not being distributed but, rather possibly, that the evaluation slips are not being returned to the central team or, there is now duplication and families may have already received a pack for a previous child.

Graph 1



Graph 1 demonstrates that there was variation in numbers of evaluation returns across the twelve months, with lowest numbers of returns received in January and in April which could be a result of holiday or leave periods.

Greater numbers of returns were made in March and June of the twelve month period.

3. Results

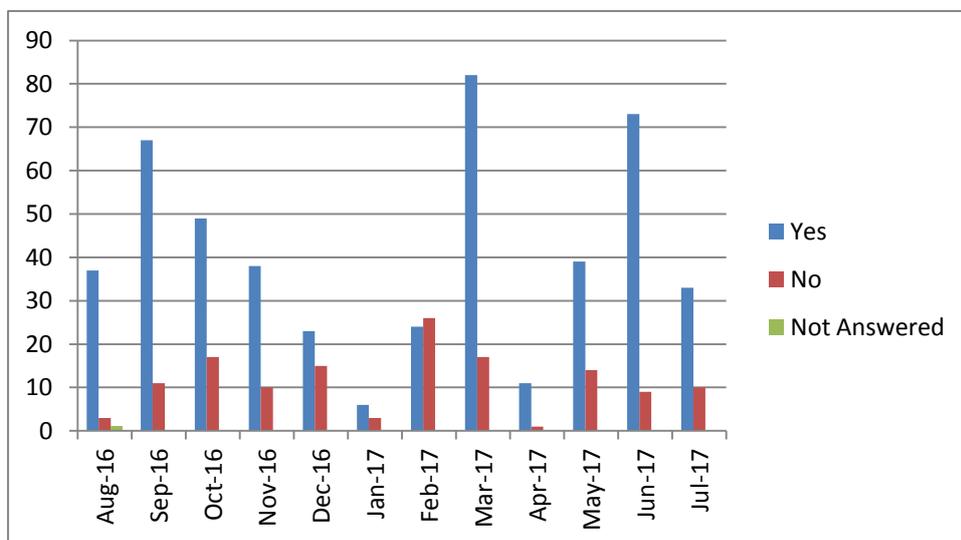
3.1 Awareness of Risks

The evaluation form asked parents/carers about their previous knowledge of the risks of liquid laundry pods/ tabs, before being provided with information and a cupboard catch pack.

Of the 619 evaluation forms returned, a total of 482, or 77.8% of respondents were aware of the risks of children accessing liquid laundry pods/ tabs, before being provided with information and a brief intervention. This is a 13% increase in general awareness in comparison to the baseline survey completed during year one of "Not for Play," which had a 65% baseline awareness level. It is difficult to pinpoint why there has been an increase, however, the issue is being raised by staff, current TV adverts recommend that liquid laundry pods/ tabs are kept away from children and the packaging standards have also changed which could all contribute to the 13% increase.

Graph 2, below, demonstrates the number of parents/carers throughout the year who said yes they were aware of the risks, or no, they were not aware of the risks, and also where this question had not been answered.

GRAPH 2

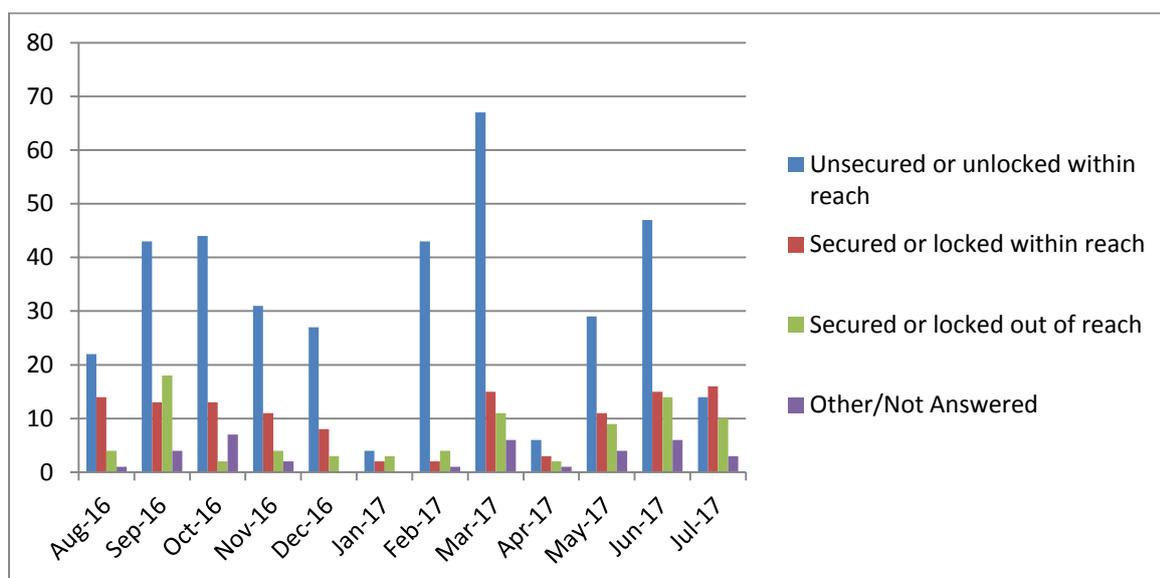


As demonstrated in graph 2 above, awareness levels varied across the year. Of the 619 evaluation forms returned, a total of 136, or 22% of respondents were not aware of the risks of children accessing liquid laundry pods /tabs, before being provided with a pack and information and 0.2% of respondents did not provide an answer.

3.2 Parents’ Behaviour and Storage of the Product

Parents/carers were asked where they currently stored liquid laundry pods/ tabs and, or other household cleaning products, before receiving an information pack and having a conversation about the issue. Graph 3, below, identifies that a total of 377 or 61% of respondents stored liquid laundry pods /tabs in an unsecured or unlocked area within reach of the children (e.g. under the sink). Despite knowledge of awareness of risks being high at 77.8%, or 482 of respondents, a total of 377 respondents, or 61% of all respondents stored liquid laundry pods/ tabs in an area that was unsecured or unlocked and within reach of children.

Graph 3



Comparison made over the four years of the programme regarding where parents/carers had previously stored liquid laundry pods/ tabs before being provided with a pack and information, has shown that around 60%, each year, stored their liquid laundry pods/ tabs in an unsecured area, e.g. under the sink, that was accessible to children.

3.3 Parents previously found a child playing with liquid laundry pods/ tabs

Parents/ carers were asked if they had ever found a child playing with liquid laundry pods/ tabs. A total of 35 respondents in year 4, or 5.7% of all respondents had found a child playing with liquid laundry pods/ tabs or household cleaning products. However, of the 35 respondents, a total of 25, or 1.6% of all respondents, had not provided enough information about their post code in the evaluation returns.

Year one highlighted 7% of respondents had found a child playing with liquid laundry pods/tabs or household cleaning products and Year two was 5%. Low numbers of responses coupled with incomplete post codes does not allow mapping of where children were found playing with liquid laundry pods /tabs across NHSGGC. In previous reports, the information was mapped out across NHSGGC by HSCP and by SIMD.

However, it is worth noting that when any children are found playing with these products, there is a greater risk of a child ingesting liquid laundry pods/ tabs and having to be admitted to hospital as a result of their injury.

3.4 Parents/carers reporting a child swallowing liquid laundry pods/ tabs or other household cleaning products

Parents/carers were asked if their child had ever swallowed liquid laundry pods/ tabs or household cleaning products. In year four, a total of 19 respondents, or 3.1% of all respondents, reported that their child had

previously swallowed liquid laundry pods /tabs or other household cleaning products.

In year one, 4% or 69 out of 1728 respondents, in year two 3.2% or 46 out of 1421 respondents and 1.9% or 12 out of 624 respondents in year three, reported that their child had previously swallowed liquid laundry pods/ tabs or other household cleaning products. This has increased slightly in year 4 to 3.1%, however it is worth noting that overall numbers of respondents reduced in year three and four.

Hence, low numbers of responses coupled with incomplete post codes does not allow mapping of where children were reported as swallowing liquid laundry pods /tabs across NHSGGC. In previous reports, the information was mapped out across NHSGGC and by HSCP.

3.5 Changes to Packaging

It is worth noting that during June 2015, revised European Standards came into force for the packaging of liquid laundry pods/ tabs. This meant that all packaging must meet the revised guidelines set out in the Standards. Manufacturers were allowed six months to amend packaging from the June, 2015 implementation date of the Standards.

3.6 Hospital Admissions

The Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) team at Glasgow's Royal Hospital for Children have reviewed all admissions to their department as a result of liquid laundry pod/ tab ingestion. During year four there have been no children admitted to the ENT department as a result of ingesting a liquid laundry pod/ tab.

Before the implementation of the "Not for Play" campaign across NHS GGC, nine children were admitted to the Children's Hospital's ENT Department for specialist treatment over one year. Comparing numbers in the pre-campaign year (2012-13) to year one and year two of the programme demonstrates a consistent reduction in the numbers of

children treated at the Children's Hospital as a result of liquid laundry pod/ tab ingestion.

The changes in legislation to the packaging have resulted in boxes which are no longer clear and children cannot directly see the brightly coloured pods or tabs inside them. The boxes now have child frustrating opening lids and the pods, tabs or caps are now coated in a bittering agent. These changes alongside Not for Play have resulted in positive changes.

3.7 Costs of treatment versus costs of packs

NHS GGC carried out an analysis comparing the cost of treating one injury versus the costs of the "Not for Play" programme in 2013. It highlighted that if only one case was prevented, the average costs saved to NHS GGC was £19,500.00, however this is an average figure and the costs may increase or decrease dependant on the treatment required per case. The costing is based on nine cases treated by the ENT department only during 2013 and excludes other departments and specialties.

In the pre-campaign year, there were nine children admitted to the Intensive Care Unit with liquid laundry pod/ tab injuries. Hospital costs for these nine children alone, excluding all other A&E or ward attendances, amounted to £175,500 in total with a mean cost of £19,500 (range £4,711-63,890). The cost per cupboard catch safety pack is £0.84, amounting to £13,440 for the 16,000 packs ordered for year four.

In year four, as a result of no children admitted, the suggested costs saved are: £175,500 costs of treating 9 cases, minus the cost of packs at £13,440, equates to a further £162,060 saved in year 4 alone. On totalling the costs for the four consecutive years of Not for Play, the total costs saved are estimated at £648,240 for NHS GGC.

The costs of treatment for liquid laundry pod/ tab ingestion are significant to the NHS and also to wider society. These costings exclude parental

time off from employment, travel to hospital or arrangements to have other children cared for. They also exclude A&E attendances.

4. Findings

The findings show a slight decrease in the number of evaluation returns made during 2016/17. A review of the resources ordered by HSCP areas has also demonstrated a reduction in resources being requested and delivered to areas. It is worth noting that the reduction may be as a result of families already having the packs from previous years and may not require a new pack.

The findings also demonstrate that despite parents/ carers being aware of the risks to children, the majority continue to store liquid laundry pods/ tabs in an area that is accessible to children. Whilst the packaging and new standards are now in place, risks remain to children, for example, when the liquid laundry tabs/ pods are accessible, if the box has been left open or if children play with these brightly coloured products.

Children are very adept and curious as they learn by watching and copying adults and so, if laundry pods/ tabs are left in an area which is accessible e.g. under the sink, children may quickly learn how to open the door under the sink as well as the laundry pod/ tab boxes.

Parents and carers also self report that they have found children playing with liquid laundry pods/ tabs, or household cleaning products and that a number have previously swallowed these items. If these children have been taken to an Emergency Department as a result of this is worth further consideration. However, with the new standards for packaging in place and liquid laundry pods /tabs now bitter to taste, children may not swallow the contents of these and may discharge the product from their mouth immediately as a result of the very bitter taste. This may also contribute to a reduced need for treatment if the product is expelled from the oral cavity immediately.

5. Recommendations

As Not for Play moves into year five, a number of recommendations are worthwhile noting for future action, including:

- 5.1** All HSCP areas should continue to order and distribute, where appropriate and at the very least should discuss the risks with families, provide a pack and, or alternative solutions when, for example, cupboard catches cannot be fixed to units and follow this issue up with every family.

- 5.2** As part of Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) and the Safe domain in SHANARRI, the wellbeing assessment should be used as a means to record risks for child safety. Future recording by staff and collation of data will demonstrate the number of children at risk, the numbers of packs distributed within HSCP areas and outcomes for families identified during risk assessment.

- 5.3** As the current supply of Not for Play packs seems sufficient for 2018/19, it would be reasonable to ask staff to continue to raise awareness amongst families across NHSGGC.

- 5.4** The behaviour of placing liquid laundry pods/ tabs and other household cleaning products under the sink should be raised as part of the wellbeing assessment for children under 5 years and particularly for families with toddlers who, by the very nature of their inquisitiveness, will explore their environment and will be at risk if they discover and open liquid laundry pods / tabs or other household cleaning products.

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