

Not for Play, Keep Them Away – Year Three September 2015 – August 2016

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This paper follows on from the “Not for Play” campaign end of year two evaluation report from August 2014 to August 2015. It provides an update on the findings of the delivery, outputs and outcomes of the third year of the “Not for Play” programme from September 2015 to August 2016. The short report provides useful information regarding insight into risks and behaviours of families across NHS GGC as well as cost savings to NHS GGC and the revised European Standards.

BMJ Award

Not for Play was Highly Commended by the BMJ in May 2016. It was recognised as a programme that could be replicated anywhere as it demonstrated considerable health benefits to families with young children as well as significant cost savings to the NHS as a result of implementation across NHS GGC.

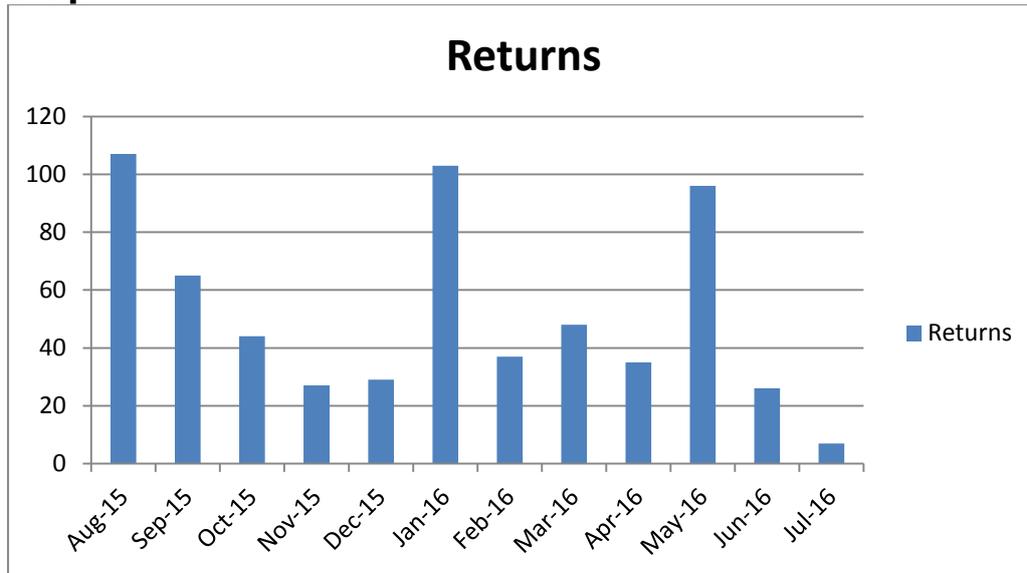
1.2 Not for play, keep them away

“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 during a brief discussion about keeping children safe from liquid 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 tabs or laundry pods and other household cleaning products or to move liquid tabs into a storage area that is not accessible by children. Children and families teams who distributed the “Not for Play” resources asked families to complete the questionnaire at the point of distribution.

A total of 624 evaluation forms were completed and provided the information contained in this report. Graph 1 shows the number of evaluation form returns made per month. The number of evaluation form returns varied across the year, this can be seen in graph 1.

In comparison to year two, where a total of 1,421 evaluation returns were made, there has been a marked decrease in the number of evaluation forms returned. There is a 56% decrease for returns made in year three. 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.

Graph 1



2. Results

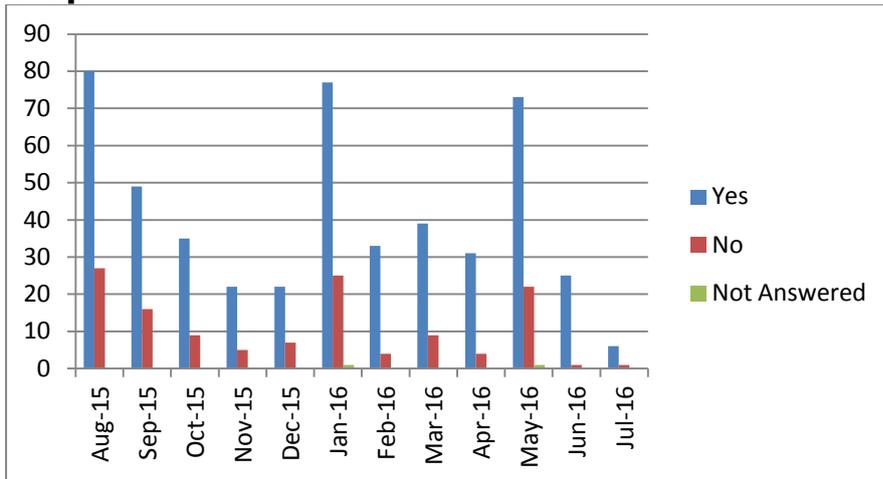
2.1 Awareness of risks

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

Of the 624 evaluation forms returned, a total of 492 or 78% of respondents were aware of the risks of children accessing liquid tabs/laundry pods, 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.

Graph 2, 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

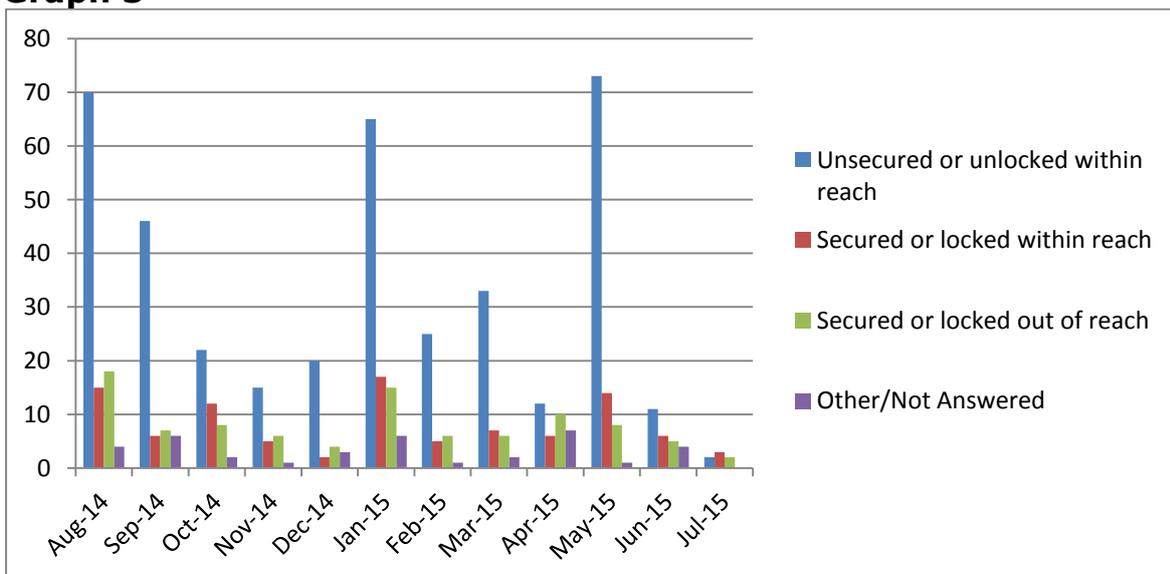


As demonstrated in the graph above, awareness levels varied across the year. Of the 624 evaluation forms returned, a total of 2 respondents or 0.3% did not answer this question. A total of 130 or 21.7% of respondents were not aware of the risks of children accessing liquid tabs/laundry pods, before being provided with a pack and information.

2.2 Parents' behaviour and storage of the product

Parents/carers were asked where they currently stored liquid tabs/laundry pods and/or other household cleaning products, before receiving an information pack and having a conversation about the issue. Graph 3 below, identifies that 394 or 63% of respondents stored liquid tabs/laundry pods in an unsecured or unlocked area within reach of the children (e.g. under the sink).

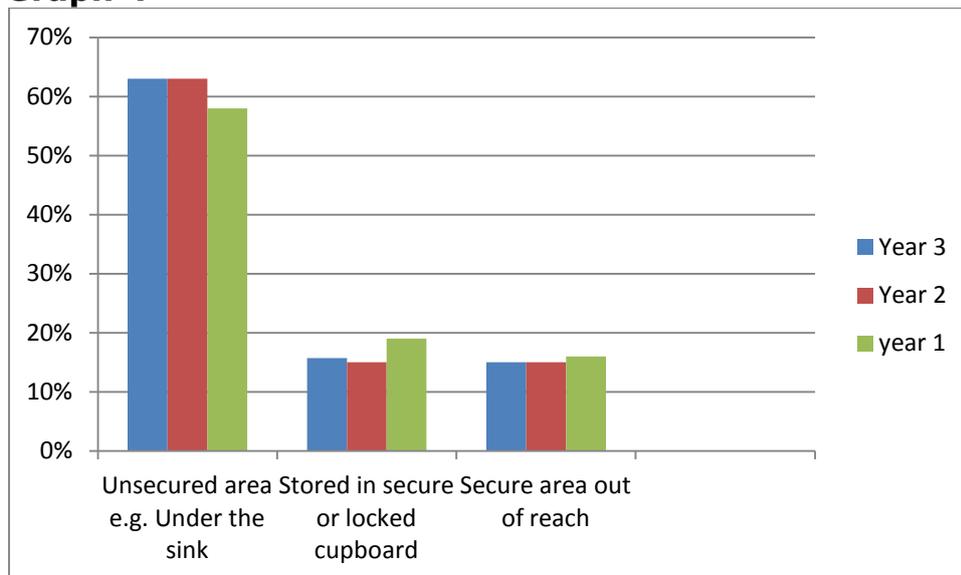
Graph 3



Graph 4 below, allows comparison over the three years of the programme regarding where parents/carers had previously stored liquid tabs or laundry pods before being provided with a pack and information.

The graph shows that more than half of all respondents, around 60% each year stored their liquid tabs/laundry pods in an unsecured area, e.g. under the sink, that was accessible to children.

Graph 4



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

Parents/carers were asked if they had ever found a child playing with liquid tabs/laundry pods. A total of 27 respondents in year 3 or 4.3% had found a child playing with liquid tabs/laundry pods or household cleaning products. However of the 27 respondents in year three who had found a child playing with these products, a total of only 21 or 3.3% had provided only part of their post code in the evaluation return.

Year one highlighted 7% of respondents had found a child playing with liquid tabs/laundry pods or household cleaning products and year two was 5%. Low numbers of responses coupled with incomplete post codes does not allow mapping out where children were found playing with liquid tabs or laundry pods across NHS GGC. In previous reports, the information was mapped out across NHS GGC 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 tabs/laundry pods and having to be admitted to hospital as a result of their injury.

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

Parents/carers were asked if their child had ever swallowed liquid tabs/laundry pods or household cleaning products. A total of 12 respondents or 1.9% of all respondents in year three reported that their child had previously swallowed liquid tabs/laundry pods or other household cleaning products.

In year one, 4% and 3.2% in year two of all respondents reported that their child had previously swallowed liquid tabs/laundry pods or other household cleaning products.

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

2.5 Changes to packaging

It is worth noting that during June 2015, revised Standards¹ came into force for the packaging of liquid tabs/laundry pods. This meant that all packaging must meet the strict revised guidelines set out in the Standards. Manufacturers were allowed six months to amend packaging from the June 2015 implementation date of the Standards. The Ear, Nose and Throat team at the Children's Hospital, NHS GGC provided a detailed background report on "Not for Play" to the relevant Trading Standards department and this was escalated accordingly to assist in providing evidence for action.

The revised Standards stipulate that:

"The outer packaging shall:

- (i) be opaque or obscure so that it impedes the visibility of the product or individual doses;*
- (ii) without prejudice to Article 32(3), bear the precautionary statement P102 "Keep out of reach of children" at a visible place and in a format that attracts attention;*
- (iii) be an easily reclosable, self-standing container;*
- (iv) without prejudice to the requirements of section 3.1, be fitted with a closure that:*
 - (a) impedes the ability of young children to open the packaging by requiring coordinated action of both hands with a strength that makes it difficult for young children to open it;*
 - (b) maintains its functionality under conditions of repeated opening and closing for the entire life span of the outer packaging.*

¹ COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 1297/2014 accessed on-line 21st December 2016.
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1418936041434&uri=CELEX:32014R1297>

3.3.3. *The soluble packaging shall:*

- (i) contain an aversive agent in a concentration which is safe and which elicits oral repulsive behaviour within a maximum time of 6 seconds, in case of accidental oral exposure;*
- (ii) retain its liquid content for at least 30 seconds when the soluble packaging is placed in water at 20°C;*
- (iii) resist mechanical compressive strength of at least 300 N under standard test conditions."*

By amending the Standards an increased protective affect is intended for children.

3. 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 tab/laundry pod ingestion. During year three there have been no children admitted as a result of ingesting a liquid tab or laundry pod.

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 tab/laundry pod ingestion.

3.1 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, 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 and excludes other departments and specialties.

In the pre-campaign year, there were nine children admitted to the Intensive Care Unit with liquid tab/laundry pod 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 three.

In year three as a result of no children admitted, the suggested costs saved are: £175,500 costs of treating nine cases, minus the cost of

packs at £13,440, equates to £162,060 saved in year three alone. On totalling the costs for the 3 consecutive years of "Not for Play", year one and two and three, the total costs saved are estimated at £450,700.00 for the NHS alone.

The costs of treatment for liquid tab/laundry pod 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 marked decrease in the number of evaluation returns made during 2015/16. A review of the resources ordered by HSCP areas has also demonstrated a reduction in resources being requested and delivered to HSCP areas. It is worth noting that the reduction may be as a result of families already having the packs from previous years however, parents may have additional children in years two and three 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 tabs/laundry pods 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 tabs/laundry pods are accessible and children can play with these brightly coloured products.

Parents and carers also self report that they have found children playing with liquid tabs/laundry pods or household cleaning products and that a number have previously swallowed these items.

5. Recommendations

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

1. All HSCP areas should continue to order and distribute, where appropriate and at the very least should discuss the risks with families, provide alternative solutions when, for example, cupboard catches cannot be fixed to units and follow this up with every family;
2. GIRFEC and the Safe domain SHANNARI wellbeing assessment should be used as a means to record risks for child safety. Considering when staff are recording information and if data can be

extracted to demonstrate number of children at risk, numbers of packs distributed, HSCP area and outcomes for families identified at risk assessment, is worthwhile;

3. A supply of "Not for Play" packs should be purchased for one more year. Beyond year four, further consideration should be given to contingency plans given current and future budget constraints across NHS GGC. This also allows a significant time lapse between implementation of the revised EU Standards and potentially halting "Not for Play" pack distribution but not halting awareness raising amongst families across NHSGGC.

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