ACCIDENTS TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

What’s the issue?

“More than one million children under the age of 15 experience accidents in and around the home every year in the UK, for which they are taken to A&E. Many more are treated by GPs, parents and carers” [147]. “In the UK, accidental injuries are the most common cause of death in children over one year of age. Children under five are most at risk from an injury in the home, with boys more likely to be injured than girls. Burns and scalds, swallowing of foreign objects and suspected poisoning are common in younger children whereas older children are more likely to experience fractures. Many accidents and deaths that occur in the home are avoidable. Young children are unable to assess the risks that things pose, and are particularly at risk if distracted, under poor supervision, being in a hurry or unfamiliar with surroundings. Their perception of the environment around them is often limited and their lack of experience and development, such as poor coordination and balance, can result in them being injured. Poor housing and overcrowded conditions also increase risk, with childhood accidents closely linked to social deprivation” [148].

What’s our situation?

In 2015/16 the hospital admission rate due to unintentional and deliberate injuries in children aged 0-14 years in Hull was 134 per 100,000 (a total of 637 admissions) and 151 per 100,000 (271 admissions) among those aged 0-4 years [26, 95, 149]. Both rates have increased over time, and are currently higher than England (104 and 130 respectively). The national inequalities gap has also widened over time, and there is a much higher admission rate among the most deprived fifth compared to least deprived fifth of Hull (35% higher for 0-14s and 23% higher for 0-4s) with huge differences across the wards (admissions of 66 in Avenue and 155 in Newland per 100,000 population for 0-14s).

For 2015/16, among those aged 15-24 years, there were 555 admissions giving an admission rate of 145 per 100,000 population which was 8% higher than England [26, 95, 149]. Rates were over 200 admissions per 100,000 population 15 years ago, so have decreased over time. Nevertheless, there are huge local inequalities (220 versus 107 admissions per 100,000 population for most and least deprived fifths in Hull) and across the wards (admissions of 63 and 279 per 100,000 population in Boothferry and St Andrew’s wards respectively).

For more detailed information, see the JSNA Toolkit: Accidents report.

What are the strategic needs?

Parents and carers of young children should be aware of the dangers to young children in the home, and should be given help and support to reduce these dangers. These risks and dangers are generally discussed during pregnancy and post-natal care, and Children's Centres do a great deal to raise this awareness, including undertaking home visits, risk assessments and referral into the Home Safety Scheme (free fitting of home safety equipment for most vulnerable families). Kid Alert is an annual initiative involving around 2,000 Year 6 (aged 10-11 years) children who go through a series of scenarios looking at different areas of safety. Work is also underway to develop an initiative on child safety for the under 5s. There is a Hull and East Riding Safe Sleeping Group which promotes safe sleeping habits for babies. There is also an Accident Prevention Work stream, and other regular promotion events in relation to home safety such as the National Play Day event and the Christmas Child Safety Campaign.
References


