

About This Report

This document presents the background, research and main findings of the *2004 National Survey into the Psychosocial Care of Children and Their Families in Hospital*. The report aims to support policy and decision makers, health professionals, children, young people and their families by:

- providing an overview of current facilities and services for children and young people receiving hospital-based health care in Australia
- outlining the important research findings underpinning best practice models of care
- recommending strategies for improvement within the Australian context.

This report profiles the main areas relating to the psychosocial needs of children and young people in hospital, and is not intended to represent anything about what may be happening — for better or worse — in other areas of the Australian health care system.

The report is divided into 15 sections equating to the categories used in the survey questionnaire. These range from the existence of separate paediatric and adolescent facilities, preparation for admission, facilities for play and recreation and parent participation in patient care, to issues of staffing, professional education, hospital–community liaison and issues for Indigenous peoples.

In conducting this follow-up survey to one that AWCH conducted in 1992, we appreciate that there will have been considerable changes in the manner in which health care has been delivered to children and young people during the period 1992–2004, including changes in context and practice that our questionnaire was unable to track. Nonetheless, we trust that this contemporary snapshot of hospital-based psychosocial care will stimulate interest, advocacy and action.

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