



# Research and Development - Family Partnership in Practice

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## Acorns Aim

That every family with a life-limited child receives the care and the support they need.



## Acorns Children's Hospices

- 3 children's hospices.
- 30 short stay beds.
- Currently supporting over 700 families in the West Midlands, Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire.
- Over 35% of families are from South Asian communities.
- Over 8% of families are from African Caribbean and other Black and minority ethnic communities.

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Care for the child,  
support for the family



**Acorns Selly Oak - 1988**



**Acorns Walsall - 1999**



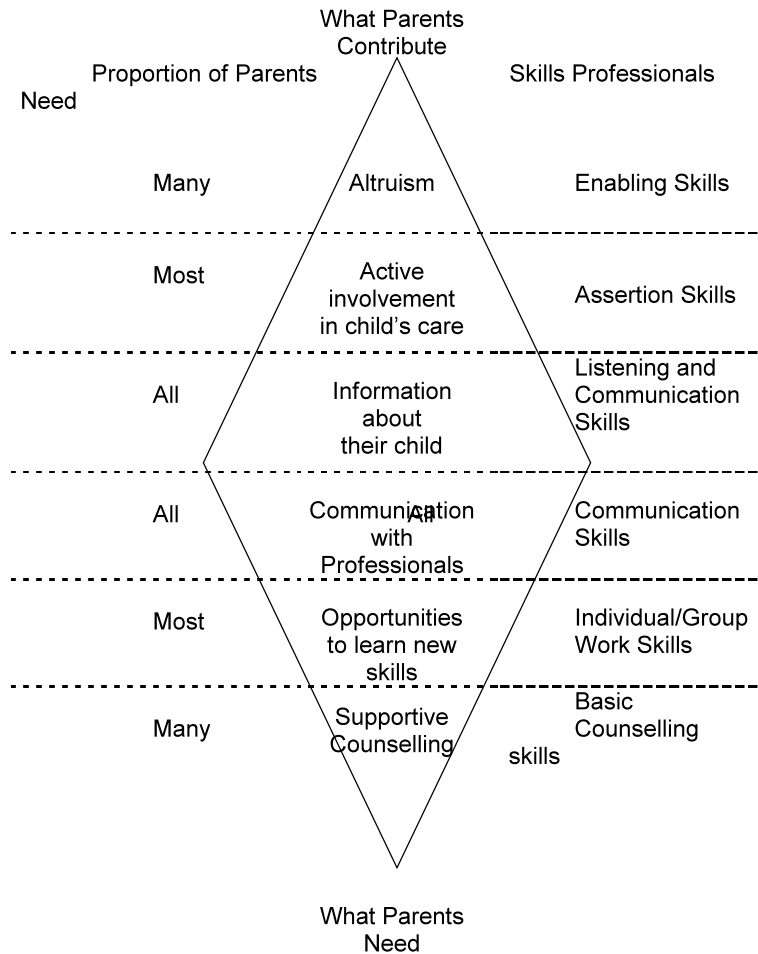
**Acorns Worcester - 2005**

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Your local children's hospice

## Working Collaboratively

A number of UK Government publications and guidelines from voluntary organisations advocate that patient and family views are included in planning and evaluating care services.

*Department of Health (2006), ACT and RCPCH (2003)*



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Meeting Parents Needs – The Supportive Role of Professionals  
(based on Hornby, 1999)



## Aims of the Evaluation

To provide a sound evidence-base in order to enhance the quality of care for all life-limited children and their families using Acorns.

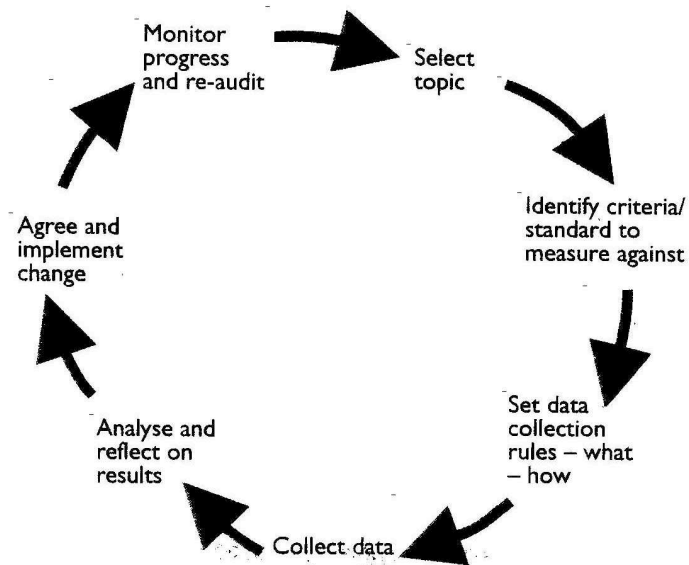
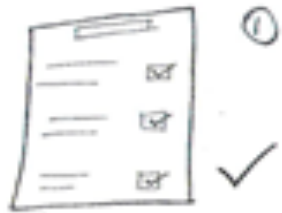


Figure 20. The audit cycle

## Process

- Part of Acorns Strategic Plan 2008-2012.
- Built on evidence collected for Healthcare Commission Inspections through 140 semi-structured interviews with families.
- Built on previous evaluations of care provision at Acorns carried out by the Research and Development Department in line with Children's Hospices UK framework *Are We Getting it Right?*



Erica asked us to do an interview with her.



She said my views were important too.



My mum and dad said nearly all good things.



Erica met my brother when He was at Acorns. He did the interview as well.



We can still be a family sometimes when my brother is at the Acorns

12/3/06

## Key Aspects of the Short-Stay Respite Care Evaluation

- Negotiating/accessing short-stay respite care.
- Caring for the child.
- Caring for the child's family.
- Relationships with staff.
- The hospice environment.
- Communicating to families.



## Working with Families

*At Acorns we believe that seeking an evidence-base for care should never compromise the well-being of families. Before families are involved in evaluations of our services we give them the following information:*

What the evaluation aims to achieve.

What benefit families can expect to receive from their involvement.

How the confidentiality of each family member will be safeguarded.

How we will feed back the results of the evaluation to them.



## Aim 1

Acorns aims to enable families to choose short-stay respite care matched to their needs.

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We were worried about going to Acorns until  
we went!

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Client Interview



tell



great!



happy place



safe place



comfortable



lazy



## Aim 2

Acorns aims to provide individual care.



## Aim 3

Acorns aims to discuss care and to record this on a detailed Care Plan.

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## Aim 4

Acorns aims to provide care in a home from home setting.

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The sofas are comfy



## Aim 5

Acorns aims to provide activities for children and young people when they stay.

## Aim 6

Acorns aims to provide the highest quality of care possible.

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- So, are we getting it right?

## Strengths of Service Provision



- The standard of care, matched to individual needs.
- Flexibility, accessibility, availability and responsiveness of staff to frequently changing situations.
- Involving parents as partners in their child's care.
- The home-from-home atmosphere of the hospice.
- Appropriateness of accommodation across the age span.
- Support for the whole family.
- Spiritual and religious care.
- The range and scope of activities available for children and the expertise of staff providing the activities.
- Safety at the hospice and child protection procedures.

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support for the family



Acorns helped make my fizzy tummy better