

# Implementing early rehabilitation and mobilisation for children in UK paediatric intensive care units: the PERMIT feasibility study

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## Plain language summary

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# Plain language summary

## Why study early rehabilitation and mobilisation?

Early rehabilitation and mobilisation, within the first week of intensive care admission, can improve the speed of recovery from illness or injury in adults. However, there is a lack of evidence about whether critically unwell children benefit from early rehabilitation and mobilisation.

## What did we want to find out?

We aimed to identify which patients may benefit from early rehabilitation and mobilisation. Also, to develop and test a manual of early rehabilitation and mobilisation using the best evidence and expertise – called the Paediatric Early Rehabilitation and Mobilisation during InTensive care manual. Then evaluate whether the manual could be implemented safely in paediatric intensive care units and was acceptable to staff and families.

## What did we do?

We undertook in respect of early rehabilitation and mobilisation:

- review of existing research;
- national survey of practice (124 staff);
- gathered information about current conduct (15 paediatric intensive care units, 169 patients);
- spoke to experts (18 people);
- developed the Paediatric Early Rehabilitation and Mobilisation during InTensive care manual to guide paediatric intensive care unit staff;
- Tested the Paediatric Early Rehabilitation and Mobilisation during InTensive care manual in three paediatric intensive care units with 30 patients;
- gathered feedback from healthcare professionals via weekly 'debriefs' (47), interviews (13) and surveys (118), and from parents via parent-completed questionnaires (21) and interviews (14).

## What did we find?

Despite being regarded as important, currently early rehabilitation and mobilisation practice is inconsistent, not considered 'early' enough and often focuses on low-risk activities conducted on the bed. Introducing the Paediatric Early Rehabilitation and Mobilisation during InTensive care manual as part of a trial was acceptable and feasible and helps standardise delivery to unwell children. Measuring child and parent reported outcomes was acceptable but follow-up at 30 days was incomplete.

## What does this mean?

A larger trial of early rehabilitation and mobilisation, involving more paediatric intensive care units, is feasible and required to demonstrate benefit to children.



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