

Psychosocial outcomes after critical illness in children

Over the past four decades, significant advances in paediatric critical care have led to lower levels of mortality from childhood critical illness. However, survival is for some not without residual impact attributed to disease-, treatment-, and PICU environment-related stressors. Subsequently, surviving critical illness can expose children to a complex array of residual, newly emerging and transient, psychological and social problems.

This session will present an overview of the short and longer-term behavioural, emotional, psychological and social outcomes of children and young people who have survived critical illness. Theories that have been proposed to explain these observed psychosocial outcomes will be outlined. The role of the family, the paediatric critical care team, and other health, social care and education professionals in supporting the psychosocial status of childhood critical illness survivors will be discussed.