GIRFT impact summary: Paediatric (adeno)tonsillectomy

Summary

Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT) is a national programme designed to improve treatment and care by eliminating unwarranted variation through clinically-led and data-driven reviews.
The ear, nose and throat (ENT) clinical leads within GIRFT **visited all providers of paediatric (adeno)tonsillectomy**, culminating in a **national report published in 2019**. The clinical leads have since worked with key stakeholders on several products intended to support providers in safe and effective paediatric day case (adeno)tonsillectomy care delivery. This summary assesses the impact of **products**, **implementation resource** and **gateway reviews** on the day case rate, emergency readmission rate, reintervention rate due to haemorrhage, and intended day case management and overnight stay conversion for young patients undergoing (adeno)tonsillectomy in England.

Dates of trust visits, products, interventions and gateway reviews

Where underlined, the wording in the list below is linked to supporting information and products

2016 GIRFT paediatric ENT trust visits begin
2019 GIRFT national report for ENT surgery
2020 Gateway reviews commence
2021 HVLC paediatric ENT work commences
Gray WK *et al.* Safety of day case paediatric tonsillectomy in England: an analysis of administrative data for the Getting It Right First Time programme
2022 Theatres programme commences
2023 Further Faster cohorts 1 and 2
Elective hubs
Focused support

Case studies:
Sheffield Children's ENT Rapid Lists
SW Surgery in Children ODN tonsillectomy Paediatric Friday at Calderdale and Huddersfield High volume week for child tonsillectomies at BHRUHT - TonKids

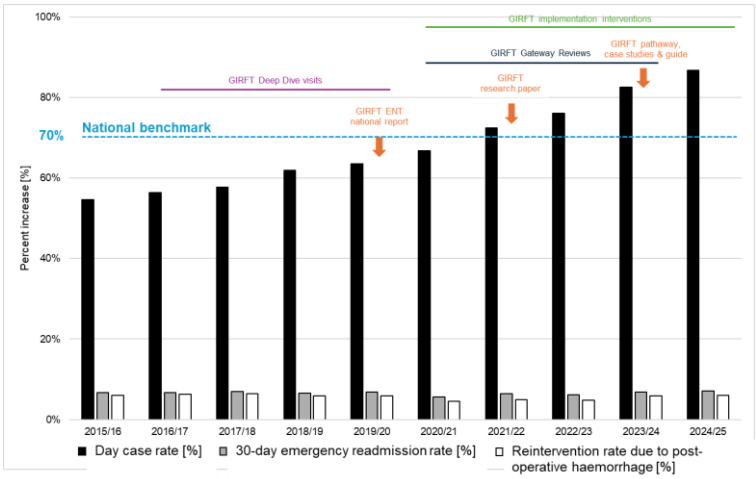
GIRFT pathways and guides:
Day Case Paediatric Adenotonsillectomy pathway
Expanding Day Case Surgery in Ear Nose and Throat Services

2024 Further Faster cohort 3
Further Faster 20
2025 Day Case Paediatric Adenotonsillectomy pathway (updated)
Implementing High Flow Lists
NCIP ENT compartment launches

Strengths and limitations

GIRFT has worked closely with organisations and stakeholders looking to improve patient care and service efficiency, although it is not possible to establish a direct correlation between GIRFT Academy products and the subsequent improvement of the quality of care in the specialty.
At the same time, while 30-day readmission and reintervention rates provide useful system-level proxies for safety, they may not fully capture immediate postoperative complications. More proximal measures, such as readmission or return to theatre within 24 hours, would provide additional insight but are not consistently available within national datasets.

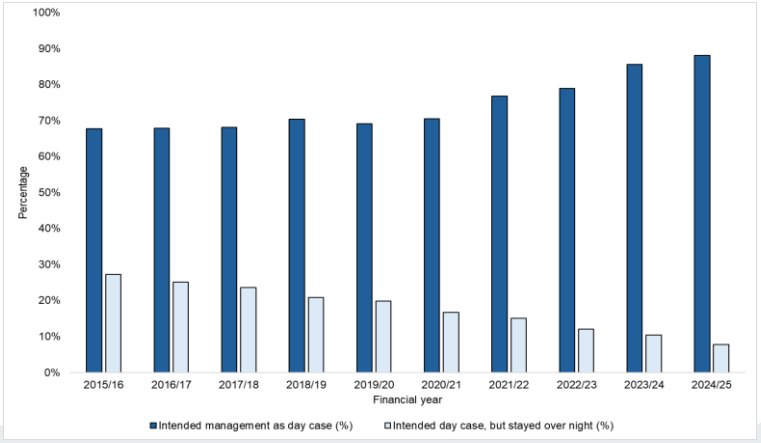
England provider mean – Rates of day case, emergency readmission and reintervention due to haemorrhage.



Observations 2015/16 to 2024/25

- **Day case rate increased** steadily from ~55% to >80%, exceeding the 70% benchmark
- **Emergency readmissions remained low and stable** throughout
- **Reintervention** (haemorrhage) **remained consistently low** with no upward trend
- **Overnight stay conversion decreased** as **intended day case management increased**

Intended day case management and overnight conversion



View metrics on the Model Health System >

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