

The Role of Child Life Therapy in Perioperative Services at Gold Coast University Hospital (GCUH).

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The Role:

- Assessment of a child's physical, cognitive and affective components
- Advocacy for procedure or environmental modifications
- Focused and therapeutic play
- Parent and staff education and support

Outcomes:

- Improvement in experience particularly for children with complex developmental needs
- Improved staff confidence
- Anecdotal reduction in surgery cancellations
- Funding from Greater Charitable Foundation



Why Occupational Therapy?

Occupational Therapists understand the importance of children's occupational performance and engagement to reduce preoperative anxiety. Preoperative anxiety is correlated with difficulty coping with demands of anaesthetic induction, as well as increased post operative pain, slower recovery and reduced engagement with health staff.[1]

What is next...

- Research framework to evaluate the Child Life Therapy role
- Collaboration with medical imaging aiming to decrease need of general anaesthetic for children requiring imaging.
- Development of an outpatient service for children identified as requiring intervention prior to, or following their surgical admission