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## Exploring parental reasons for attendance at emergency departments for children with minor illness: A mixed methods systematic review

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**Statement of the Problem:** The demand for urgent healthcare services is increasing, and the pressure on emergency departments (EDs) is of significant concern worldwide. The usage of EDs by parents of children with minor illness is an important and still unresolved problem causing a burden to healthcare services. The aim of this review was to explore the literature surrounding parental reasons for visiting ED for children with minor illness.

**Method:** Seven electronic databases (Medline, Embase, PsycINFO, CINAHL, PubMed, Web of Science, and Scopus) were comprehensively searched during a two-week period in August 2016. The study selection process was undertaken independently by two authors. Data were analysed by means of narrative synthesis.

**Results:** 22 studies were included. 12 studies employed quantitative methods, nine studies used qualitative methods, and one study used mixed methods. Parental reasons for using ED included perceived urgency, ED advantages (e.g. faster service, superior ED resources and efficiency), and difficulties with getting a GP appointment, lack of facilities in primary healthcare services, lack of health insurance, reassurance, convenience and access.

**Conclusion & Significance:** This review identified some of the reasons why parents bring their children to the ED for minor illnesses highlighting the multifaceted nature of this problem. Identifying such reasons may help us to better design targeted interventions which seek to reduce unnecessary ED visits which would save overstretched healthcare resources. This review may help inform emergency care policy makers and healthcare staffs in better understanding why parents choose to visit the ED for non-urgent childhood illnesses.

### Biography

Ahmet Butun has expertise in the field of Emergency Nursing. He obtained his Master's degree at University of Nottingham. His master's dissertation focused on "Why parents choose to use the emergency department for children presenting with minor illness". He is currently a PhD student at Queen's University Belfast and his research project seeks to identify parental reasons for visiting ED rather than their primary healthcare providers in the context of developing countries.

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