Navigating uncertain illness trajectories for young children with serious infectious illness: a modified grounded theory study.

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Figure 4 One child’s trajectory from onset of illness to district general hospital admission

2-4 year old living with both parents, no sibling, pneumonia

Monday
- He was sent home from nursery because of a temperature
- I met a doctor there who was very nice, she checked him and he was normal, just had a bit of a cold. So that is the Wednesday.
- He’s been checked by the doctors.

Wednesday
- Monday He was sent home from nursery because of a temperature
- Tuesday I just took one look at him and went, ‘No, this doesn’t seem right, let’s call in the doctors’. There was no-one to call and we didn’t want to be those people that clog up the NHS and it was just a cough. We’ve been to the doctor. Then they said okay, we’ll send as an ambulance now.
- Wednesday Saturday We thought it is half one in the morning, would it not be better for us to get a bit of sleep rather than be in A&E all night, so we did not go in the ambulance.

Saturday
- Wednesday We thought it is half one in the morning, would it not be better for us to get a bit of sleep rather than be in A&E all night, so we did not go in the ambulance.
- Friday Later that night, he still hadn’t kept any food or fluid down. I walked into the lounge and he was coughing and then he coughed, and coughed and coughed and coughed. I was like, ‘Oh my God, he’s not stopping’. We called the ambulance and we grabbed him and I went. ‘We are going now’. We thought it is half one in the morning, would it not be better for us to get a bit of sleep rather than be in A&E all night, so we did not go in the ambulance.
- Thursday When he was being checked out in A&E they were saying, ‘Is his skin always itchy and scratchy?’ and then they took his top off and they were looking at the way he was breathing and saying, ‘Look, do you see how he’s really sucking in when he’s breathing and you can see his tummy’s going underneath his ribs? That’s a sign that he’s struggling to get enough oxygen’. We then ended up in intensive care.