

# What evidence is there for a relationship between organisational features and patient outcomes in congenital heart disease services? A rapid review

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## Plain English summary

Organisational features and patient outcomes in CHD services

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## Plain English summary

Some people have problems with the structure of their heart when they are born (congenital heart disease). These problems need treatment during childhood and sometimes later when the patients become adults, and it is important that these people are cared for in a hospital where they will get the best possible specialist treatment for their condition.

For our review, we were asked to look at whether or not the treatment that patients receive and what happens to them as a result of this treatment (outcomes) are influenced by features of the hospital treating them. It is often thought that in hospitals where a lot of operations are done (both in the hospital and by individual surgeons), care for patients is better. It is also often thought that hospitals where key services are located together have better outcomes. We looked at published academic articles to provide this information.

We found 39 scientific studies that had investigated these features and analysed them to identify the key messages they contained. The main outcome studied was whether or not patients survived their surgery.

Our review found that while many of the studies show better patient outcomes when larger volumes of surgery are performed, this was not consistent and not all of the studies showed this. Where studies showed that there was a relationship between better patient outcomes and larger volumes of surgery, it was not clear why larger volumes led to better outcomes. More research is needed to try to better understand what other aspects of service affect outcome.

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