

Understanding how post-ICU follow-up is delivered within the role of critical care outreach teams

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Registration date 14/10/2025	Overall study status Ongoing	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 14/10/2025	Condition category Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

Most patients that are discharged from an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) expect to recover well enough to be discharged home. Sadly 1 in 12 of these patient die unexpectedly on the wards. For those who are well enough to be discharged home unfortunately nearly a third are readmitted as an emergency within 3 month of hospital discharge. This all happens despite established ICU follow up/ recovery services in up to three quarters of ICUs in the UK. There are currently no standardised pathways that exist for this particular patient group. This study is the first step in the Enhanced Recovery after Critical Care (ERACC) programme. The programme aims to create a new care pathway to better support patients after they leave intensive care. To do this, we first need to understand how critical care outreach teams currently support patients in the UK. This knowledge is essential to help shape the design of this new pathway

Who can participate?

This qualitative study will include observations of staff as well as interviews with staff, patients who have been in ICU and their families (When referring to family members within this protocol this encompasses, spouses, children, siblings, close friends etc)

What does the study involve?

The study involves participants undertaking one interview exploring their perception of how ICU follow up care is delivered currently. Staff members will be observed completing their role in caring for post-ICU patients.

What are the potential benefits and risks of participating?

Benefits to participating include helping to inform and determine how future post-ICU care looks with current NHS provision.

There are no known risks to this study, but interviews have the potential to cover some distressing topics, the researchers will be experienced in conducting interviews with this patient group and will offer support and signpost participants for further support if required.

Where is the study run?
University of Oxford (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
July 2025 to June 2026

Who is funding the study?
National Institute of Health and Care Research (UK)

Who is the main contact?
Dr Sarah Vollam, eracc@ndcn.ox.ac.uk

Contact information

Type(s)

Public, Scientific, Principal investigator

Contact name

Dr Sarah Vollam

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Additional identifiers

Clinical Trials Information System (CTIS)

Nil known

Integrated Research Application System (IRAS)

353261

Protocol serial number

69232

Study information

Scientific Title

Enhanced Recovery After Critical Care (ERACC): Qualitative study

Acronym

ERACC: qualitative study

Study objectives

1. To understand how post-ICU follow-up care is delivered within the wider remit of Critical Care Outreach team (CCOT) workloads
2. To understand different models of post-ICU care delivery
3. To understand what proportion of CCOT time is spent on ICU follow-up care and how this is prioritised (e.g. internal/external drivers)
4. To understand the competing demands on CCOT time
5. To understand the experience of CCOT staff of providing ICU follow-up care within their role
6. To understand the wider staff perception of current ICU follow-up care provision and perception of what follow-up care should look like
7. To understand patient and family member perceptions of ICU follow-up care provision

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)

approved 11/07/2025, London - Chelsea Research Ethics Committee (Research Ethics Committee (REC) London Centre, 2 Redman Place, Stratford, London, E20 1JQ, United Kingdom; +44 (0)207 104 8141; chelsea.rec@hra.nhs.uk), ref: 25/PR/0773

Study design

Multicenter qualitative study using semi-structured interviews and ethnographic observations

Primary study design

Observational

Study type(s)

Other

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Post-intensive care unit in-hospital ward stay

Interventions

Semi-structured interviews:

Critical Care Outreach team (CCOT) members, multidisciplinary staff working within these teams, patients discharged from ICU and their family members will take part in one semi-structured interview, exploring their perception of how follow-up care is delivered within the workload of CCOT.

Ethnographic observations:

Members of staff within the CCOT and follow-up teams will be observed within their role collecting data on the tasks they perform, people they interact with, and proportion of time spent on each activity they undertake. Direct patient care will not be observed.

Intervention Type

Other

Primary outcome(s)

The delivery of post-ICU follow-up care within the wider remit of CCOT workloads will be explored using ethnographic observations of CCOT activity within the acute ward environment.

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Models of post-ICU care delivery, CCOT time allocation and prioritisation and demands on CCOT will be explored using ethnographic observations of CCOT activity within the acute ward environment.
2. CCOT staff experiences of providing ICU follow-up care within their role will be explored using qualitative interviews.
3. Wider staff perceptions of current ICU follow-up care provision and perception of what follow-up care should look like will be explored using qualitative interviews.
4. Patient and family member perceptions of ICU follow-up care provision will be explored using qualitative interviews up to three months following discharge from ICU.

Completion date

30/06/2026

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

Semi-structured interviews:

1. Patient/family member/staff member aged 18 years or over
2. Is willing and able to give informed consent for participation in the study
3. Is a patient discharged from ICU to the ward, or a family member of a patient discharged from ICU to the ward, or a staff member who supports patients discharged from ICU to the ward
4. Is willing and able to participate in an interview about their experiences

Ethnographic observations:

1. A member of the CCOT at participating sites
2. Is willing and able to give informed consent for participation in the study
3. Is willing and able to be observed during their clinical practice

Participant type(s)

Patient, Health professional, Other

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Adult

Lower age limit

18 years

Sex

All

Key exclusion criteria

1. Not consenting to participate
2. Patient not wishing for family member to take part

Date of first enrolment

01/10/2025

Date of final enrolment

30/06/2026

Locations

Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre**Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust**

Royal Berkshire Hospital

London Road

Reading

United Kingdom

RG1 5AN

Study participating centre**The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust**

Russells Hall Hospital

Pensnett Road

Dudley

United Kingdom

DY1 2HQ

Study participating centre**Queen Elizabeth Hospital Kings Lynn**

Gayton Road

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Site

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United Kingdom

PE30 4ET

Study participating centre

University Hospital Southampton
Southampton University Hospital
Tremona Road
Southampton
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SO16 6YD

Study participating centre
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
St. James's University Hospital
Beckett Street
Leeds
United Kingdom
LS9 7TF

Sponsor information

Organisation
University of Oxford

ROR
<https://ror.org/052gg0110>

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
National Institute for Health and Care Research

Alternative Name(s)
National Institute for Health Research, NIHR Research, NIHRresearch, NIHR - National Institute for Health Research, NIHR (The National Institute for Health and Care Research), NIHR

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
National government

Location

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are not expected to be made available due to the fact REC approval has not been sought as the data generated will be specific to the research question

IPD sharing plan summary

Not expected to be made available

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Protocol file	version 1.0	03/06/2025	14/10/2025	No	No
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes