What can be done to support health professionals to diagnose meningitis quickly?

“Spotting the Sick Child” was an award winning, interactive tool commissioned by the Department of Health to support health professionals in the assessment of the acutely sick child, including meningitis and septicaemia (www.spottingthesickchild.com). The tool was taken over by the Royal College of Paediatric and Child Health in 2014-5.

Funding a revision of this interactive tool would be an excellent way to support health professionals to diagnose meningitis quickly.

Are children with suspected meningococcal disease treated “without delay” as recommended in the NICE Meningitis and Meningococcal disease Guideline (recommendation 1.4.3)?

Studies looking at “Door to needle” time for children with meningococcal disease show 76-100% who present with the typical rash are treated within an hour. The average time from admission to first dose of intravenous antibiotic is;

- 36 minutes [1]
- 60 minutes improved to 18 minutes after training for staff [2]
- 51 minutes [3]


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