

# Parental Escalation of Care for Kids



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**The key question:  
Are you worried your child is getting worse?**

## Background & Objective

- Parents and carers know their children best and can be the first to notice signs that something is ‘not right’
- The Parental Escalation of Care for Kids (PECK) Pilot was designed to study the effectiveness and acceptability of integrating a proactive question into the Children’s Early Warning Tool (CEWT): “Do you feel your child’s condition is worse and you are now more worried?”
- This initiative aimed to empower parents and carers to voice concerns about potential worsening of their child’s condition

## Implementation

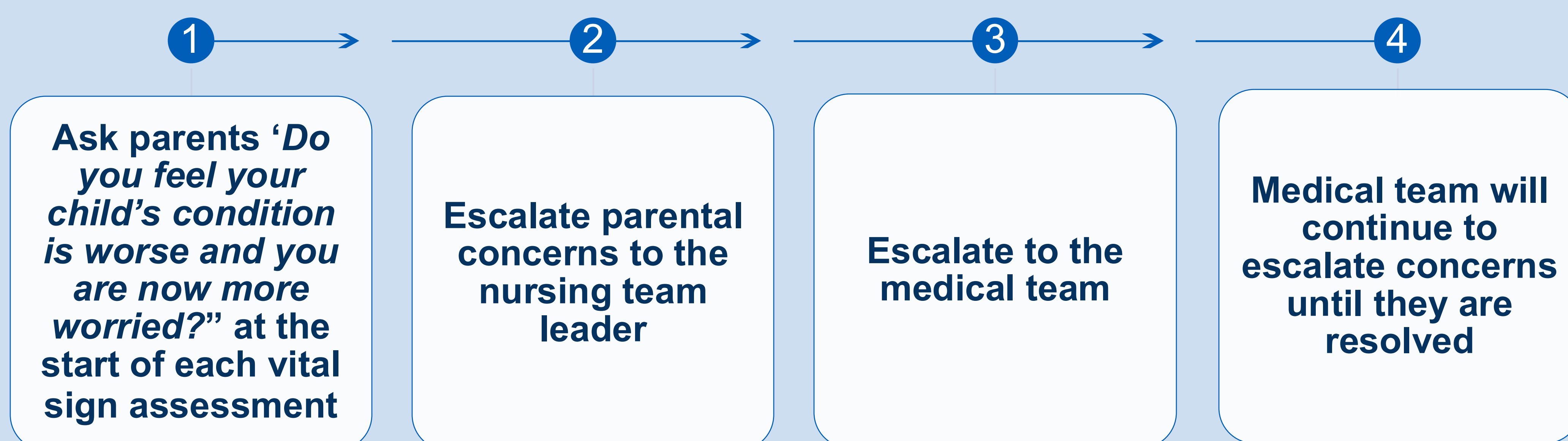
### Five pilot sites:

- Bundaberg Hospital, Paediatric Ward
- Caboolture Hospital, Paediatric Emergency Department & Paediatric Ward
- Hervey Bay Hospital, Paediatric Ward
- Mt Isa Hospital, Paediatric Ward
- Toowoomba Hospital, Paediatric Ward

Pilot timeline: 12 weeks (May – July 2025)

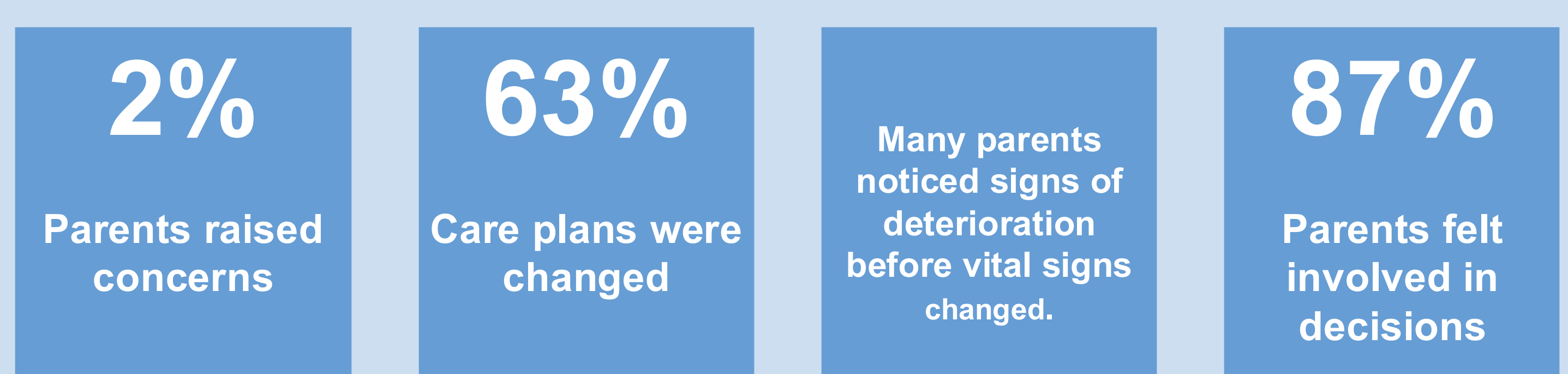
### Each pilot site:

- Trained staff using resources developed by the project team
- Attended a fortnightly huddle to share their experiences and escalate concerns
- Recorded all PECK ‘yes’ responses on a centralised register
- Facilitated parents and carers to provide feedback via a survey
- Encouraged staff to participate in staff evaluation survey



## Outcomes

Reason for parent and carer concern	Number of Yes Responses
Patient getting worse or not doing as well as expected	56
Other (detailed below)	11
Feel concerns not being heard	10
Pain	9
Patient showing behaviour that is not normal for them	6
Care plan – don’t know or understand what is happening	4
Request a second opinion	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>82</b>
Other includes:	
• Increased temperatures x 2	
• Increased work of breathing x 2	



**78% of staff report PECK improved parent engagement**

We gratefully acknowledge the staff at the pilot sites who participated in this pilot.

For more information about this project, please contact [Elesha.Toscano@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:Elesha.Toscano@health.qld.gov.au)

Mills, E. et al. (2025) Association between caregiver concern for clinical deterioration and critical illness in children presenting to hospital: a prospective cohort study. *Lancet Child Adolesc Health*, 9, 450-458.

Van den Bruel, A., Haj-Hassan, T., Thompson, M., Buntinx, F., Mant, D., & European Research Network on Recognising Serious Infection investigators (2010). Diagnostic value of clinical features at presentation to identify serious infection in children in developed countries: a systematic review. *Lancet (London, England)*, 375(9717), 834–845. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(09\)62000-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(09)62000-6)