

One to one nursing, or specialling is a way of caring for patients by providing continuous observation (by “sitters”) for an individual for a period of time during acute physical or mental illness.

Some patients need more than a general level of observation on a ward, often with the primary aim of reducing risk and protecting the patient.

Our review, [published in a BITE](#), examined published evidence on the topic of specialling and sitters, aiming to identify the challenges and concerns relating to the cost effectiveness and quality of care.



CLAHRC North Thames
September 2018



National Institute for
Health Research

CLAHRCBITE

Brokering Innovation Through Evidence

**One to one specialling and sitters in acute care hospitals:
reviewing the evidence on cost effectiveness and quality of care**



Some hospital inpatients require the continuous presence of a member of the nursing team.

This form of one to one nursing is sometimes referred to as specialling - a type of care which is provided to ensure the safety of patients who may be suffering from cognitive impairment, exhibit challenging behaviour, or may be at risk of falls or of causing harm to themselves or others.

This category of care is common practice in most hospitals around the world but there is a lack of evidence about its cost effectiveness and the quality of care provided.

The variable quality and cost are a concern for acute secondary healthcare providers.

What was the aim of the project?

The project was a scoping review which was aimed at exploring the published evidence on specialling and sitters and to identify the challenges and concerns relating to the quality of care provided

This review aims to investigate current evidence and determine the implications of this for policy, practice and future research.

What did we do?

Our scoping review involved a key word search of different databases: MEDLINE, Scopus, CINAHL Plus, Web of Science, ProQuest Social Science and ProQuest Nursing and Allied Health.

Our search aimed to identify any relevant literature (Reports, commentaries, Journal articles etc.) on the topic of specialling or sitters.

This research is funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care North Thames (CLAHRC North Thames).