

Table 1 General characteristics of children and their parents who consented for their child to be involved in research and those who refused

Variable	Consenters (n = 98)		Refusers (n = 259)	
	No.	%	No.	%
<b>Child's variables</b>				
Mean (SD) age (years)	8.6 (7.2)		2.6 (1.2) <sup>a</sup>	
Sex (male)	58	59.2	127	49.0
Disease severity				
Mild	25	25.5	71	27.4
Moderate	52	53.1	134	51.7
Severe	21	21.4	54	20.8
Disease/reason for admission				
Central nervous system disease	7	7.1	18	6.9
Respiratory disease	24	24.5	65	25.1
Cardiovascular disease	15	15.3	32	12.4
Gastroenterology disease	10	10.2	41	15.8
Genitourinary disease	7	7.1	20	7.7
Haematology/oncology disease	13	13.3	20	7.7
Endocrine disease	11	11.2	26	10.0
Genetic disease	4	4.1	11	4.2
Other	7	7.1	26	10.0
Disease is recurrent	57	58.2	127	49.0
<b>Parents' variables</b>				
Socioeconomic status				
Low	52	53.1	109	42.1
Middle	39	39.8	127	49.0
High	7	7.1	23	8.9
Education <sup>b</sup>				
None	12	12.2	38	14.7
Primary	25	25.5	47	18.1
Secondary	38	38.8	105	40.5
College	23	23.5	69	26.6
Postgraduate	0	0.0	0	0.0
Marital status				
Married	88	89.8	223	86.1
Divorced	10	10.2	34	13.1
Widowed	0	0.0	2	0.8
Mean (SD) age (years)				
Father	33.0 (7.0)		34.6 (8.0)	
Mother	29.3 (3.0)		30.4 (6.0)	
Previous experience of care				
Had bad experience with hospital/physicians	19	19.4	44	17.0
Acquainted with the involved physicians	23	23.5	45	17.4
Conflicting views between parents	19	19.4	54	20.8
Source of information				
Television	4	4.1	10	3.9
Friends	3	3.1	8	3.1
Other patients	3	3.1	6	2.3
Physician or nurse	71	72.4	205	79.2
Books or Internet	6	6.1	7	2.7
Other	11	11.2	23	8.9

<sup>a</sup>P < 0.01 for child's age; no other significant differences were found between consenters and refusers by Student-t test or chi-squared test (Fisher exact).

<sup>b</sup>Lowest level of education among the parents.