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**Children with single ventricle congenital heart defects: considering the parent experience**

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**Background**

- About 1% of children are born with congenital heart defects (CHD) worldwide.
- CHD impacts parents’ psychological health and family life and heightens their stress compared to the wellbeing of parents with typically developed children.
- In-depth understanding of the shared experiences of parents is currently lacking.
- The aim of this study was to explore the lived experiences of parents who have children with a diagnosis of single ventricle CHD, from diagnosis through to their childhood and adolescence.

**Method**

- Qualitative interviews with 12 parents, recruited from a children’s hospital.
- The children were diagnosed either antenatally or postnatally and had completed the Fontan surgery at least six months prior to the start of recruitment.
- Semi-structured interviews explored parent experiences from the point of diagnosis, the process of multiple surgeries, caring for a child with a cardiac condition, family relationships, impact on life and experience of support throughout their child’s life.
- Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was applied.

**Results**

**Clinical implications**

- Healthcare professionals should promote emotional wellbeing and provide support to families with a diagnosis of CHD at significant time points during the patient journey.

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