

# Implementing Eat-Sleep-Console (ESC) in the NICU to treat Neonatal Opioid Withdrawal Symptoms

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## BACKGROUND

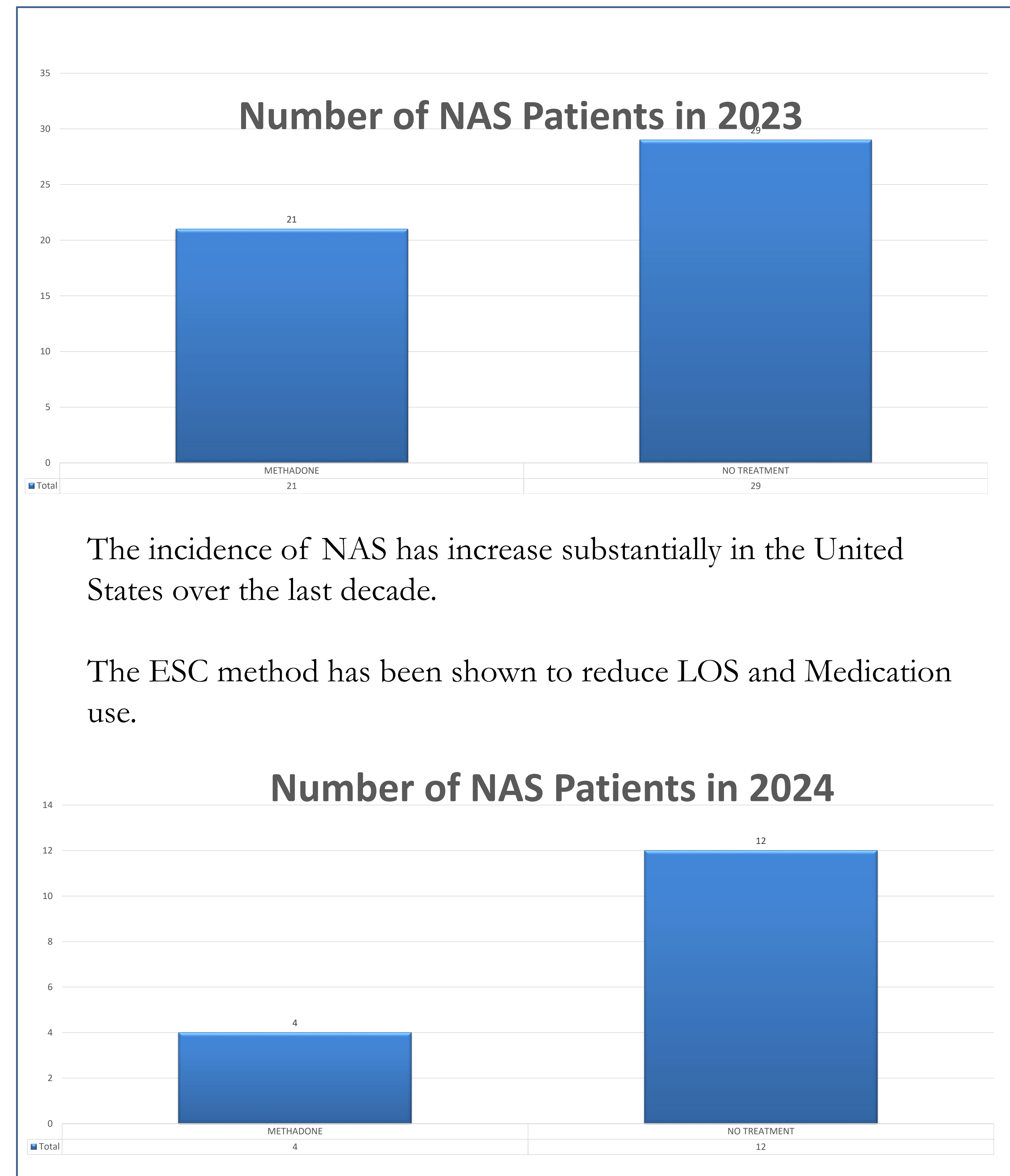
The traditional method to treat infants born with withdrawal symptoms from Opioids is to administer medications like Methadone or Morphine. The tool to measure the severity of the withdrawal is the Finnegan Neonatal Abstinence Scoring Tool. Based on the score the infant receives (consecutive scores of 3 >8 or 2 >12) then weight based pharmacological treatment is started at the appropriate frequency. The new approach to treat withdrawal symptoms is to use Eat, Sleep, Console (ESC). The focus is on how the infant is able to eat, how long it sleeps and how easily it can be consoled without using pharmacological interventions.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of Eat, Sleep, Console (ESC) is to minimize the use of pharmacological drugs and decrease the length of stay for the infant.

## METHODS

- Set group of nurses to care for NAS babies.
- 1:2 patient assignments and not be an admit nurse.
- A designated area is used with ambient light to provide low lighting for cares.
- Developmental care for the babies.
  - Swaddle baths
  - Swaddling infant for weights and partial swaddling with diaper changes.
- Use of swaddle wraps to carry babies around and allow them contact and security. (At nurses comfort level)
- Feedings= shift goal for volume
- Allowing infant to feed on demand whether it be hourly, every 2 hours or even sleeping for 6 hours at a time as long as we are meeting the shift goal.
- Increasing calories of formula to counteract the increased calorie burn these babies have.



## RESULTS

In 2023 42% of NAS patients required Pharmaceutical treatment for opioid withdraws and 58% did not require pharmaceutical treatment. UMC NICU saw a 17% decrease in the number of patients requiring Pharmaceutical treatment in 2024 by applying ESC Principals. In 2024 25% of patients have required pharmaceutical treatment vs 75% that did not require treatment.



## CONCLUSIONS

By applying ESC principals UMC NICU has been able to decrease the number of patients requiring pharmaceutical such as methadone and/ or morphine for opioid withdrawals. A move towards as needed medications instead of scheduled dosing will be examined as comfort measures are improved.

## REFERENCES

See Poster Authors for references.

