

## BACKGROUND

This survey was done as a collaborative team effort by the UMC Neonatal ICU Nursing and Therapy teams to better understand the educational needs of the NICU staff with regards to developmental support for its patient-population, the neonates. Due to the close working relationship between the two teams, staff developmental education projects have always been welcomed to keep the staff updated with current best practice in the field. As with any learning opportunity, an assessment of learning needs is necessary to guide learning goals and outcomes. This is not the first time that feedback from an in service training has been used to improve succeeding in services. However, this is the first time that a formal survey has been done to further assess staff learning needs and other challenges in updating knowledge of NICU developmental practices..

## PURPOSE

1. Assess staff learning needs and challenges in updating knowledge of NICU developmental best practices;
2. Specifically, find out staff awareness and use of the principles of Neuroprotective Care and Neurodevelopmental Core Measures; and
3. Establish a baseline data to be able to assess if succeeding learning interventions make a difference or not.

## METHODS

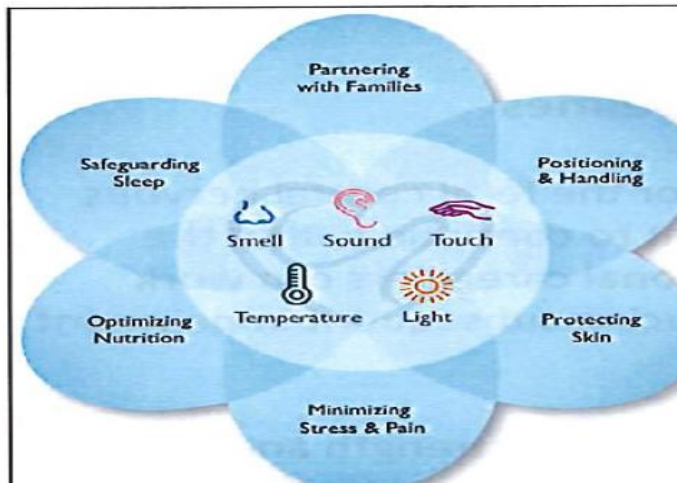
The purpose of the study was discussed with the Unit Based Council Core Group during one of its meetings. A paper questionnaire was developed by the researchers as data collection tool.

Permission was obtained from NICU Nursing Leadership to distribute the questionnaire to all NICU RN staff both day and night shifts. Data collection was done during the week of August 24, 2020. Data was collated in Excel spreadsheet and presented to the UBC Core Group during their September 15, 2020 meeting. NICU Leadership was also provided a copy of the survey results.



At the very center of the Neonatal ICU's existence is its patient-population, the Neonates. Neonatal medicine and developmental practices have advanced rapidly over the last decade that it is possible for extremely premature and low birth weight infants to survive. At the UMC NICU, it's smallest infant to date (birth weight = 385 grams) went home early this year and is thriving in his home environment.

As positive as the outlook for premature babies are, there are a lot of challenges for the NICU team ahead. One of these is to reduce long-term impairments for the neonate. These include physical, cognitive, social-emotional, and behavioral impairments, as well. As primary caregivers while in the NICU, the team has the responsibility to find ways to better support the preterm's fragile neurologic system. Thus, adaptation and use of the principles of Neuroprotection care and Neurodevelopmental Core Measures is extremely important to achieve this goal.



## RESULTS

Eighty percent of the respondents (N=44) are familiar with the concept of Neuroprotection Care and Neurodevelopment Core Measures. Of these, 40% frequently use this concept in their daily practice.

Positioning and Handling is one of the core measures and 52% of the respondents frequently use developmental devices to properly position and handle their patients.

With regards to other education concerns, 75% of the respondents never, seldom or infrequently get the chance to read nursing journals and/or nursing publications.

Majority of the respondents (80%) indicated that they prefer in-services and hands on training for Evidence-Based Practice updates.

## Discussion and Recommendations

1. Although majority of the respondents are familiar with the concept of Neuroprotective Care and Neurodevelopmental Core Measures, it is extremely important that everyone who works in the NICU be cognizant of these concepts.
2. There is a glaring need for education on the consistent use of developmental devices in positioning and handling neonates.
3. Data from this survey supports literature which states that one of the barriers for Evidence-Based Practice is the nurses' lack of time to go to the library to read research (Jarvis & Eckhardt, 2020).
4. The need for education on the consistent use of developmental devices is already being addressed by an Occupational Therapy Training video.
5. A developmental team will be formed which will have both nurses and therapists as members to further discuss and plan developmental learning activities in the NICU.

[www.neonataltherapist.com](http://www.neonataltherapist.com)

[www.NANN.org](http://www.NANN.org)

[Neonatal Neuroprotection: Bringing Best Practice to the Bedside in the NICU](#). Lockridge T.MCN Am J Matern Child Nurs. 2018

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