

Reducing Time to First Skin-to-Skin Care in the NICU

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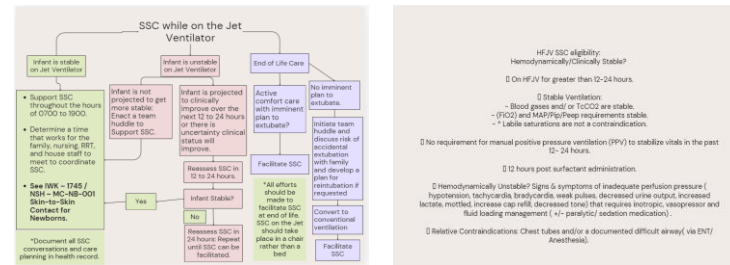
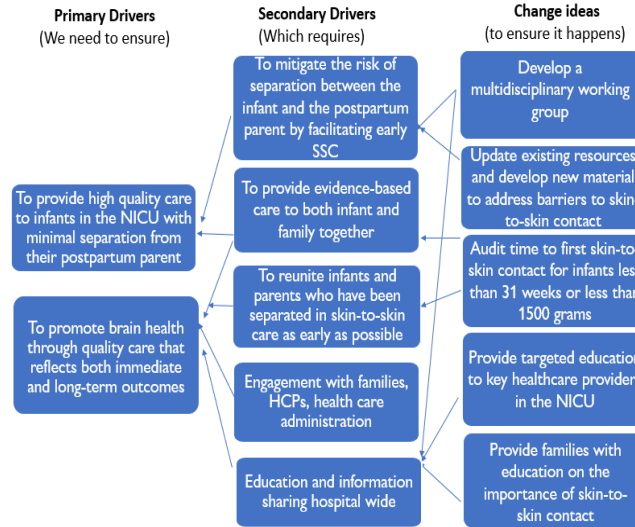
AIM

To enhance health outcomes of very preterm and VLBW infants and their postpartum parents by promoting early skin-to-skin care in the NICU.

INTERVENTIONS

- Education day for nurses
- Roving road shows to raise awareness on early SSC in the NICU
- Working group to create SSC guidelines for Jet Ventilator
- Include early SSC information in antenatal consults with Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Updated SSC policy to include WHO recommendation for SSC 8 to 24 hours a day
- Developed SSC checklist to support early SSC for very preterm and very low birthweight babies

Specific Aim:
To reduce the time to first skin-to-skin care for very preterm infants (< 31 weeks or < 1500 grams) by 20% by end of December 2024
*Average baseline of 75 hours

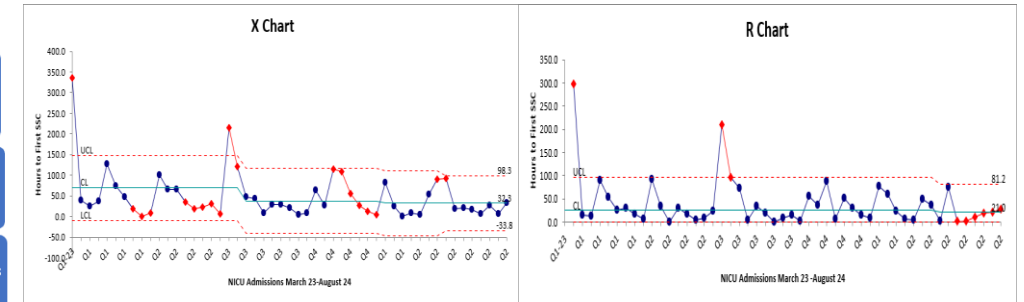


Skin-to-Skin Contact: The Optimal Environment

- The most optimal environment to support neurodevelopment and developmental care.
- The ultimate healing environment for newborn infants.
- It provides an opportunity to partner with families by giving parents an active role in their infant's care.
- Facilitates supportive positioning and handling.
- Provides privacy for essential infant/parent interactions to meet soothing and self-soothing needs.
- SSC supports autonomic and physiologic stability to reduce pain and maximize care.
- It protects skin by providing humidity and supporting thermoregulation.
- It soothes the mother/child/parent's milk supply and facilitates breastfeeding, thus supporting lactation.
- SSC promotes optimal brain development, supports hearing and growth, improves parental infant bonding, reduces infection rates, and decreases length of hospital stay.



RESULTS



The median time from birth to first SSC dropped from 75 hours to 32 hours. This practice implementation process showed stabilization over time.

Lessons Learned:

- Staff and families alike need to be supported to offer and facilitate skin-to-skin care
- SSC for the very preterm and low birth weight baby improves with family and team shared decision making

Next Steps:

- Continue promotion of early skin-to-skin care
 - Orientation and training of new staff
- Mitigate barriers (staff shortage, awareness of supportive resources, bringing evidence to practice)

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