

**“Evolution of a Family-Centered CAre Program in a California Safety Net NICU” with Priya Jegatheesan, MD & Sangeeta Mellik, PhD**

**Q:** How do NICUs receive support from March of Dimes? Do ALL NICUs qualify?

**A:** MOD provides in kind support with materials for families - books, onesies during holiday activities, educational materials for staff and families, etc.

**Q:** What is your policy for sibling visitation?

**A:** We did open up for sibling visitation which was driven by our FCC Team. We screen for vaccination and any s/s of illness for the child who is visiting.

**Q:** Can you share you unit’s Family Support Specialist job description?

**A:** The FSS job description can be found [here](#).

**Q:** What percentage of parents attend offered classes?

**A:** In 2023, our total NICU admissions were 349. In the same year, 119 (34%) infants were discharged at <4 days from NICU who would not have the opportunity to attend these classes. Of the remaining 230 families, 142 (62%) families attended CPR/Baby Care (discharge teaching) classes.

**Q:** How often do you have scrapbooking? Is it well attended?

**A:** Once a week and it is offered evenings/weekends to make it easy for our families to attend. Most of our families visit after hours.

**Q:** How does the FSS collaborate with social workers and healthcare professionals?

**A:** Our FCC team participates in weekly clinical rounds and multi-disciplinary rounds with NICU clinical staff, and on a weekly basis connects with our NICU social worker regarding NICU families. We are the voice of the families at these meetings and our NICU leadership and social worker follow up on any issues that we bring up. It is a collaborative process.

**Q:** Do families have confusion or a difficult time understanding/learning the difference between Family Support Specialist and Social Worker roles?

**A:** Our Family Support Specialists introduce themselves as peer support staff so that families do not confuse them with other staff,

**Q:** Do Family Support Specialists/members of the FCC Team work on major holidays to host parties for families? How does that work logistically?

**A:** Our FSS are often present on the unit during weekends or off hours. It is not necessarily the same day of the holiday but around the holiday.

**Q:** How do you educate staff on family communication?

**A:** We have several ways in which we educate staff on family communication. Formal educational videos from the March of Dimes or CPQCC are shared at least once every quarter around topic areas like trauma informed care, the NICU family experience, medical jargon and

family comprehension, staff burnout etc. Furthermore, advocating to have the family voice heard at regular weekly NICU meetings allows us to attune staff to the family perspective as well. In addition, sharing feedback to NICU staff from our Family Staff Advisory Council as well as through our Family Satisfaction Survey every 1-2 months also allows us to help attune the team regarding several issues such as the experience of families with Non-English-Speaking Preference (NELP), the trauma many family members face during their NICU journey, educational needs of our families, etc.

**Q:** How often do you do staff education? How do you get leadership buy-in? Do you include it as part of the orientation?

**A:** There is some topic related to FCC once a month in our weekly conferences. There is no specific education as part of the orientation.

**Q:** Are your videos available to circulate to Taskforce members?

**A:** March of Dimes grand rounds videos are typically made available to all NICU Family Support Sites. We would encourage interested NICUs to contact MOD for access to those videos. CPQCC makes many of its NICU educational videos available to all NICUs at [www.cpqcc.org](http://www.cpqcc.org).

**Q:** How do you measure and monitor the impact of your efforts? How do you know if they are achieving your goals?

**A:** Breastfeeding rates, length of stay for infants with NAS, stories/quotes from families

**Q:** How many family support specialists do you have? How does someone become one?

**A:** Three FSS, they are identified by the clinical team and current family support specialists.

**Q:** Regarding your family gatherings, have you found a particular time of day that works best for families? Weekdays or weekends? Day time vs. evenings? When you provide food do you show better attendance?

**A:** Evening hours and weekends work better for our families as they often visit at that time.

### **“What it takes to implement Social Determinants of Health screening and referral in the NICU” with Erika (Gaby) Cordova Ramos, MD**

**Q:** What data did you collect to advocate for getting a NICU-specific social worker? Not combined with the postpartum unit.

**A:** We collected both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data included family experience. A few families never met with the social worker and many others talked about the need for more hands-on support to connect with resources (this served to advocate for the navigator role as well). Quantitative data included the very high burden of unmet basic needs identified through screening.

**Q:** Can you share UBER Health Transportation tips? Is your hospital okay with people using it?

**A:** You can find the program outline and some of the problems we encountered with proposed solutions [here](#). The hospital is okay with people using it.

**Q:** Who is assigned to check that resources are still helpful every six months?

**A:** I did it for two years, it's now a research assistant. We are very intentional about following up with families about how helpful the resources were. We tend to find out about unhelpful resources or changes in contact information from families before we need to do a regular check.

**Q:** Is the THRIVE tool available for others to use?

**A:** The questionnaire can be found [here](#). As we are disseminating our work in MA, some other hospitals have adopted the tool as well.

**Q:** How did you incorporate Social Determinants of Health screening into EPIC?

**A:** There is an informatics task force that deals with hospital-wide implementation of SDOH screening into EPIC. We will have an APA SIG at PAS this year with a focus on informatics and SDOH screen and referral!

**Link for VON's Health Equity guidelines:**

[Health Equity - Vermont Oxford Network \(vtoxford.org\)](https://vtoxford.org)