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Creation of a 'Code Golden Hour' to Improve Outcomes in Neonates < 30 Weeks' Gestation

PURPOSE

The purpose of this DNP project was to optimize outcomes for babies < 30 weeks' gestation via systemic awareness & communication within the first hour of life, known as the Neonatal Golden Hour.

BACKGROUND

This project was implemented at a Level III NICU in Houston, Texas.

METHODOLOGY

The project included a 'Golden Hour' checklist for delivery of babies < 30 weeks' gestation and implementation of a 'Code Golden Hour' to create systemic priority and awareness for interventions and orders. The primary goal was for the isolette to be closed by one hour of life.

RESULTS

Improvements were recognized in all metrics with a decrease in time to computer registration (85 minutes to 22 minutes), antibiotic administration (137 mins to 91 mins), IV fluid initiation (101 minutes to 88 minutes), and time to top down (154 mins to 100 mins). The transfer rate of babies to a higher level of care decreased from an average of 20% pre- intervention to 0% post-intervention.

IMPLICATIONS

With multi-disciplinary awareness of the importance of the neonatal 'Golden Hour', optimal care of babies < 30 weeks was provided thereby improving outcomes. Education enhanced communication and teamwork for all NICU patients. This contributes to evidence on a systemic approach to care of babies <30 weeks' gestation to enhance outcomes.