

The Allied Health Infant and Family Discharge Program

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Background

The inpatient unit of the Department of Neonatal Medicine at the Royal Children's Hospital (RCH), Melbourne provides quaternary level care for the sickest babies from Victoria and interstate. A consequence of the severity of illness is often an extended length of stay and numerous barriers to discharge home for infants and their families.

Funded by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Advanced Practice in Allied Health Program, this joint speech pathology/occupational therapy initiative aims to: 1) identify and develop a program of core competencies to enhance early parenting skills and foster the confidence of parents to complete everyday care routines, and 2) address facilitators and barriers to parental provision of infant care routines for promoting safe and timely discharge from the neonatal unit.

Methods

This project is being conducted from June 2015 to January 2016, including an initial program development phase from June to August 2015. The RCH Project Charter Guidelines will be used to inform program development including determining the reasons for change, what the program is trying to accomplish and the key measures (outcome, process and check) that will be used to measure change. Project risks and mitigation will be considered, as well as facilitators and barriers to change.

Results

The focus of this presentation will be upon the program development process. The results will include identified reasons for change, objectives of the program, and the measures that will be used to evaluate the program outcomes. The risks and implications of program roll-out will also be presented.

Discussion

This presentation will discuss the implications of conducting a project aimed at developing core competencies to enhance early parenting skills. Preparation for discharge should include increasing the competence and confidence of parents in providing daily care routines for their infants, delivered within a multidisciplinary model of care.