Factors Affecting Time Nurses Spend with Fathers in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
Background

- Over 14% of newborns
- Average length of hospital stay 13.2 days
- Average hospital cost was $76,000
- Hospital cost for < 32 weeks was > $280,000

Family Centered Care

- Family-centered care is a philosophy of care that promotes equality in decision-making. The care of the infant is shared between staff and families with the intention of improving outcomes for infants and families.

Benefits of Father Involvement

• reduce infant mortality
• reduce length of NICU stay
• improve premature infant sleep
Significance

• Fathers have a desire to be involved but are reluctant to do so.
• Parents often cannot hold or perform care for weeks due if the infant is very ill.
• Many times parents cannot perform care similar to home care until close to discharge.
• As length of hospitalization increases, visitation decreases.
• Fathers typically visit less than mothers.
Literature review

• Nurses as a role-model to fathers
  – Parents often feel the need to be invited by nurses to participate.

• Factors which may affect parent participation:
  – Staff shortages
  – Bedside rounds
  – NICU may lack space for parents
AIM

To explore and describe factors which affect time that nurses spend with fathers in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).
Sample

• Convenience sample
  – n=94 out of 274 nurses
  – 34% response rate
• Inclusion criteria
  – Nurse working in NICU in any role except nurse practitioner
• Exclusion criteria
  – Nurse practitioner
Sample Demographics

• **Age**
  – mean 39.6 (SD= 12.9) (range 23-72)

• **Years as an RN**
  – median of 10.0 (5.0, 24.8)

• **Years in a NICU**
  – median of 8.0 (4.0, 16.8)

• **Role in NICU**
  – 80% bedside nurses
  – 14% charge nurses
Sample Demographics

- 57% day shift
- 90% full-time
- 64% Bachelor’s degree
- 99% female
- 66% married
- 93% Caucasian
Methodology

• Descriptive, Survey

• Setting: Large urban teaching facility at a children’s hospital in the Southeast United States

• Online Survey
  – Institutional review board approval
  – Anonymous, survey links by email sent by unit manager
Data Analysis

• Descriptive statistics
  – One quantitative question

• Content analysis of open-ended question
  – Out of 94 participants, 61 (65%) provided data
    • Two researchers with expertise in FCC
    • 91.7% interrater reliability
Results

- Nurses were asked “How much time do you spend with the father when he visits?” (n=94)
  - Most or all of the visit, n=16 (17%)
  - More than half but less than ¾, n=23 (24.5%)
  - Less than ½ but more than ¼, n= 41 (43.6%)
  - Less than ¼ of the visit, n=14 (14.9%)
Factors affecting time nurses spend with fathers (n= 61)

Nurse Factors
• Work flow
• Equal educator
• Focus on mother
• Focus on father
• Family bonding
• Nurse as gatekeeper

Father Factors
• Confidence
• Motivation
• Level of competence
• Beliefs
• Attitudes
• Availability

Mother Factors
• Culture
• Maternal gatekeeping

Infant Factors
• Level of illness
• Tolerance to activity
Conclusion

• Many factors influence the time that nurses can spend with fathers at the bedside.

Implications for nursing practice
• Nurses must find time to encourage unmotivated and unavailable fathers to participate in care (based on infant level of illness).
• Encourage partnerships between parents in caring for their infants.
Acknowledgements

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Thank you

• Questions?