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The use of clinical audit in successfully implementing a change of clinical practice in developmental positioning

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Abstract:

Objective: The purpose of this study was to audit current practice in developmental positioning in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) of the Princess Royal Maternity Hospital in relation to local developmental care guidelines.

Method: The Greater Glasgow & Clyde Developmental Care Guidelines identified a number of criteria essential to therapeutic positioning. An audit tool was developed to audit positioning of preterm infants using a scoring system based on criteria identified in the guidelines. An initial audit was carried out within the NICU over a period of 12 weeks and a need for change was identified. A new fluidised positioning system was introduced following an education programme. The audit process was repeated.

Results: The initial audit indicated 56% good range positioning scores by the nurses while the second audit following the education programme indicated an improvement in practice, with 86% good range positioning scores achieved by the nurses.

Conclusion: 91% of nurses completing the final questionnaire reported a positive response to using the product and the change in practice. They were of the opinion that the fluidised positioning system offered better positioning and containment and reported that infants seemed more settled and appeared to sleep for longer periods.

Keywords: developmental positioning; physiological flexion; audit tool; tortoise fluidised positioning system; education programme

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