Development & Initiating Routine Postpartum Screening in the NICU

Stephen R. Gillaspy, PhD
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Governor’s Transformation Advisory Board
Plan and Objectives

- Postpartum Mood and Anxiety
  - Prevalence; NICU; Risk Factors

- NICU Postpartum Screening Research Project
  - Goal / Purpose; Results; Conclusions

- Current NICU Postpartum Screening Initiative
  - Goals; Process; Progress to date
Maternity Blues

- Transitory phenomenon occurring in 50%-80% of new mothers (Miller & Rukstalis, 1999)
- Tearfulness, mood swings, and fatigue
- Usually present the first few days and may only last hours
Postpartum Depression

- Estimated to occur in approximately 15.7% of new mothers (CDC, 2007)
- In Oklahoma one in four new mothers report symptoms of postpartum depression (OK PRAMS, 2008)
- Mothers of preterm infants experience PPD at higher rates than mothers who deliver full-term (Veddovi et al., 2001)
Postpartum Anxiety

- PTSD estimated to occur in up to 5% of births and partial symptoms in 25% of births (Creedy et al., 2000; Czarnocka et al., 2000).
- OCD symptoms found to occur in 3-5% of mothers (Indman & Bennett, 2006).
- High co-morbidity between depression and anxiety symptoms in perinatal women (Moses-Kolko et al., 2005)
The NICU Experience

- Parents of NICU patients commonly experience:
  - high levels of stress
  - feelings of helplessness
  - lack of knowledge on how to parent, interact and care for their neonates during the NICU stay (Cusson, 2003; Melnyk et al., 2001; Pinelli, 2002)
  - uncertainty
Depression/Anxiety in the NICU

- PPD rates in the NICU range from 28% to 70% (Mounts, 2009)
- Rates of anxiety have also been found to be significantly higher in NICU samples (Carter et al., 2007)
- Greater risk for PTSD given NICU experience (Beck, 2003)
Postpartum Depression Risk Factors

- Social Support
- Prenatal Depression
- Life Stress
- Marital Relationships
- Depression History
- Infant Temperament
- Prenatal Anxiety
- Childcare Stress

- Maternity Blues
- Self Esteem*
- Marital Status*
- Socioeconomic Status*
- Unplanned/unwanted pregnancy*

(Beck, 2001; Beck 1996)
The Contribution of Postpartum Psychosocial Variables to Infant Length of Stay in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
Purpose

• *Central tenet* –
  - Poor maternal psychological functioning would be associated with increased neonate Length of Stay (LOS) in the NICU.

• **Goals:**
  - Assess related psychosocial variables in mothers of neonates admitted to the NICU and
  - Assess the contribution of psychosocial variables to neonate LOS in the NICU.
Design and Methods

• Data collection site was the NICU at OUHSC.

• Inclusion Criteria
  – Mother of neonate in the NICU at two weeks postpartum.

• Exclusion Criteria
  – Infant with congenital anomalies, require surgery, have significant cardiac abnormalities, or chromosomal defects
  – Mother reads below the 8th grade level
  – Mother does not speak English
Assessment Measures

- Demographics
- Postpartum Depression Screening Scale (Beck, 2002)
- Postpartum Support Questionnaire (Logsdon, 2002)
- The Parental Stressor Scale-Neonatal Intensive Care (Miles, 1989)
Assessment Measures

- The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger, 1977)
- The Clinical Risk Index for Babies (Richardson et al., 1988)
- Length of Stay
Descriptive Statistics

- **n = 111**

- **Demographics**
  - Ethnicity: 61% Caucasian; 18% African American; 11% Native American; 5% Hispanic; and 5% other ethnicity.
  - Mean Age of 25.39 years.
  - Marital status: 43.2% Married; 23% Single; 27% Partnered; 4% Divorced; and 3% Separated.
  - Education: most of the participants (49.5%) indicated receiving some college or higher level of education.
  - Insurance: 77.5% Medicaid; 17.1% Private Insurance; and 2.7% Both.
Descriptive Statistics

- 39.1% First pregnancy
- 63.1% Pregnancy not planned
- The mean score (40.33) for trait anxiety was significantly higher than published norms.
Mental Health History

- n = 111
- 39.6% reported previous diagnosis and/or treatment for depression, anxiety, or substance use.
Postpartum Depression

PPD Screening

- 52.3% Positive Screening
- 29.7% At risk level of symptoms
- 18% Normal Adjustment
Results

- When we control for illness severity, anxiety \( (r = .267) \) and stress associated with infant appearance \( (r = .271) \) remain correlated with LOS for mothers without a previous mental health history.
Conclusions

• The majority of participants had a positive screening for postpartum depression, had elevated anxiety, and elevated stress related to the NICU environment.
Conclusions

• The significant correlations of trait anxiety and stressors associated with the physical appearance of the infant with length of stay in the NICU support the tenet that postpartum psychological functioning is related to length of stay for infants in the NICU.
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  - Carla Hetherington, MS, ARNP, Department of Pediatrics, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
  - Mary Anne McCaffree, M.D., Department of Pediatrics, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
  - Brianna Bright, M.A. Assistant Professor of Research, Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology, College of Public Health, Department of Pediatrics, College of Medicine
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Postpartum Screening in the NICU

- Advocating for screening in the NICU
  - Beck, 2003
  - AAP Policy Statement, 2008
    - Hospital Discharge of the High-Risk Neonate
  - Mounts, 2009

- Barriers
  - Patient-centered
  - Staff-centered
  - Systems-centered
Postpartum Screening in the NICU

• Typical mental health system versus public health model

• We must change the culture through education and system development
Postpartum Screening in the NICU

- **Goals**
  - Develop routine screening process
  - Make appropriate referrals
  - Develop referral network
  - Assess barriers to referrals
  - Develop tools for screening and referral process
Postpartum Screening in the NICU

- Screening Criteria
  - All mother with infants on the NICU
  - Screening to be done at 2 weeks or greater

- Screening Measure
  - Postpartum Depression Screening Scale
  - English and Spanish
Postpartum Screening in the NICU

- **Process**
  - All mothers screened at 2 weeks postpartum
    - Project Coordinator
  - Mothers with a positive screen are referred to psychologists for diagnostic interview
  - Psychologist makes community referrals
Postpartum Screening in the NICU

• Nursing Education
  – In services
    • PKU – second newborn screen

• Progress so far
  – Total # screened
  – Total number of positive screens
Postpartum Screening in the NICU

- Process development
  - Collaboration
    - Women’s & Newborn Services; OHCA; FQHC
  - Forms
    - Brochure; Fax Form; Referral Directory
- Presentations
  - Local and Regional
- Publications
Questions?

Stephen R. Gillaspy
Assistant Professor, Section of General and Community Pediatrics
Department of Pediatrics, The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
Stephen-Gillaspy@ouhsc.edu