

Introduction

KK Women's and Children's neonatal units receive on average 200 very low birth weight infants (≤ 1500 grams) per year, each with an estimated stay of 75 days. Two earlier studies (Mazlan, 2013; Bos, 2016) indicated that parents limit engagement during this period because of a lack of knowledge on how to interact with their infant and for fear of interfering with care.

To address the problem, Family-Integrated-Care - the gold standard of care in neonatal units across the globe (O'Brien et al., 2015) was established in 2017 focusing on early parent-infant interaction. In-house education programmes for parents were revised and ground champions with an emphasis on education were mobilised. Post implementation results indicated that parents listed an even greater need for more hands-on opportunities with their infants and to have a variety of resources readily available to them to facilitate care and interaction (Mazlan et al., 2017).

Aims

- To provide resources to facilitate greater parental involvement in the care of the child while in the special care nursery
- To provide parents autonomy to apply skills gained from caregiver training sessions

Methodology

Two mobile trolleys were acquired and stocked with age-appropriate and population-specific books and toys e.g. low-pitched rattles, contrast cards. Written information on interaction and the use of materials were provided. Trolleys were stationed at highly visible and accessible locations. Craft materials were included for parents to personalise their infant's journals. Physiotherapists and nurses regularly directed and encouraged parents to use the resources whenever they visited. Usage of the library was evaluated via self-report surveys by nurses and parents 8 months after it was launched.

Results

92.9% of nurses and 64% of parents knew about Ollie Polly. 91% of parents were satisfied with the variety of resources with books, contrast cards and rattles/textured rings being items that were most used. All parents reported that they felt confident when interacting with their child. In fact, only 4% of nurses who observed parents using the trolley thought that it did not help in increasing their competence in handling their infant. Ollie Polly provided resources and gave parents more purposeful activity ideas whilst they spent time with their infant on the unit. It also gave them opportunities to apply skills learnt from caregiver training sessions.

Rank	Activities with infant
1	Sitting beside and being with my child
1	Reading to my child
2	Feeding to my child
3	Changing diaper
4	Kangaroo care
5	Massage

Table 1. Activities parents did with their infants

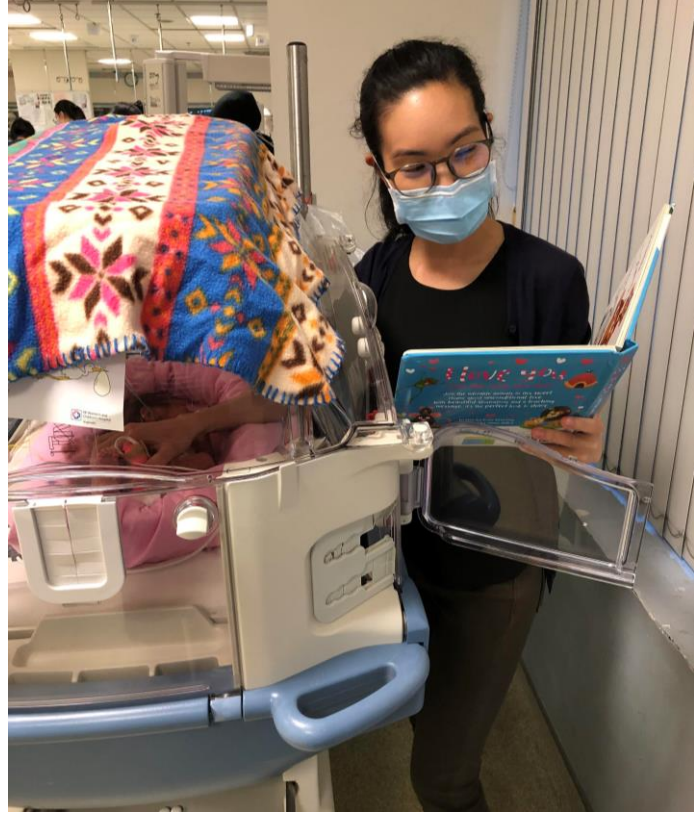


Figure 1. Parent reading to infant

Discussion

Ollie Polly was a low cost, low maintenance solution to address parents' need for more resources to facilitate engagement with their infants. It provided them with the flexibility to access items when it was convenient to them. Continual efforts to increase the usage of this valuable resource should be emphasized as parental confidence and competence is important to the development of very low birth weight infants.

Conclusion

Provision of a mobile book and toy library has enhanced parental satisfaction and confidence. This suggests that with the resources provided, parents were more confident in interacting with their infant.

References
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