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Kangaroo Mother Care protecting the parental-neonate bond

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Introduction

The birth of a baby is an exciting, wonderful event in a parent's life with the development of the parental-neonate bond being a natural and beautiful experience. After a placement in a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), I identified that parental-neonate separation, greatly affected bonding and therefore parental self esteem, indirectly medical intervention and nursing staff provided that barrier. Admission of a baby to NICU involves the separation of parents from their baby, which contributes to an already stressful situation for parents. Evidence shows that early separation of the neonate from their parents, can cause developmental delays as well as impaired immunity and psychological stability (Turnbull & Petty, 2013). Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) is facilitated in Swedish NICU as a popular alternative to conventional incubation (Blomqvist and Nyqvist, 2010). Using the PECOT model, I developed the search question "Does Kangaroo Mothers Care act as a delivery of care that supports development of the parental-neonate bond and paternal self esteem in a neonatal intensive care setting?"

Findings based on literature review

Review of the literature found that parents who gave KMC to their neonate, reported higher self esteem levels in comparison to parents of neonates who were cared for in conventional incubation.

Parents liked that KMC allowed them to be closer to their baby, preventing separation, and also felt more actively involved in their baby's care, nurturing their parental self esteem.

Parents who gave KMC, felt that KMC enabled them to bond with their baby, and attributed this to the skin to skin contact and long periods of time spent with their baby that KMC facilitated.

Barriers identified by parents were lack of support from nursing staff during KMC, inadequate education about KMC technique and benefits and settings that did not ensure privacy.

(Blomqvist, Nyqvist 2010 & Blomqvist, Frouland, Rubertsson, Nyqvist 2012 & Jihye, Kyung-Sook 2011)

Recommendations and rationale

- All New Zealand district health boards develop policies around KMC use in NICU's detailing exclusion criteria and protocol. This will ensure KMC is performed safely and appropriately.
- Nursing staff understand the benefits of KMC for neonate and parental bonding and psychological stability, supporting the family centred care approach (Daziell, 2011).
- Parents to make an informed decision about giving KMC, based around education from nurses, respecting the Right to be Fully Informed (HDC, 1996). The literature identified some parents felt uninformed.
- Nursing staff are supportive during KMC, providing positive reinforcement, ensuring appropriate technique and facilitating privacy. Nurses attitudes to parents ultimately affect parental-self esteem.

Conclusion

Adopting the family centred care approach, parental mental health and wellbeing should be a priority for NICU nurses (Daziell, 2011). KMC is a method that ensures the parental-neonates bond is not delayed, parents feel important and beneficial in their baby's treatment and consequentially parental self esteem levels grow.

Supporting the development of the parent-neonate bond and protecting parental self esteem, enables parent's ability to meet their baby's needs after discharge.

References

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| Pecot Category | Information relating to question | Explanation |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Population | Parents of premature neonates, admitted to Neonatal Intensive Care Unit | Study is focusing on KMC use in NICU's |
| Exposure | KMC use during time in NICU and parents responses | I will be looking for articles that reviewed the experiences of parents who gave KMC |
| Comparison/Control | Conventional incubation where by nurses are the primary care givers, resulting in delayed parent-neonate bonding and decreased parental self esteem | I am interested in KMC's effect on parent-neonate bonding and parental self-esteem, as opposed to conventional incubation |
| Outcome | Parents feel that KMC facilitated bonding with their baby and supported parental self-esteem | The parent's perception of KMC and where they accredit KMC to bonding and increased levels of parental self-esteem |
| Time | The length of time family is in NICU | Each family's admission time is different. The study will look at KMC in the NICU setting. |

"Does Kangaroo Mothers Care act as a delivery of care that supports development of the parental-neonate bond and paternal self-esteem in a neonatal intensive care setting?"

Whitehead, D. (2013) Searching and reviewing the research literature (pp 35-56) In Z. Schneider & D. Whitehead (Eds). *Nursing and Midwifery Research methods and appraisal for evidence-based practice 4th ed.* Australia: Elsevier

Rationale for presenting information on a poster

I chose to do a poster as I felt that a poster would enable me to condense my information into user-friendly, summarised and precise content. After talking with parents in an NICU setting and acknowledging the separation they felt from their baby, I wanted to look into alternatives to conventional incubation that supported parental mental health and wellbeing as well as baby's physiological wellbeing. Kangaroo Mother Care and its benefits really interested me and after completing a review of the literature I enjoyed sharing my information with others. This poster is a summarisation of my findings that is legible and user-friendly, to ensure all people can take something from it. I hope that this poster raises awareness amongst student nurses and registered nurses, about the importance of providing care that is family centred, using this holistic approach to ensure better long term health benefits for infants.