

Improving Health Equity for NICU Families of Color

CPQCC has partnered with families from across the United States to develop **ten tips for improving family-centered care and health equity for NICU families of color**. The tips stem from research that shows that families of color often receive unequal treatment in the NICU (Sigurdson et. al, 2018).

UNIT CULTURE

Signal the importance of family-centered care.

- Provide multi-lingual signage welcoming all families as partners in care with messages like "NICU families, we welcome you as partners in your child's care at all times" or "Ask for an update from your baby's care team and/or physician, every day."

Ensure families are greeted and treated respectfully.

- Deliver cultural competency, structural competency, anti-bias trainings at all levels of the organization.

STAFF COMMUNICATION

Offer opportunities for families to interact with their babies and care team in ways that work for them.

- Consideration interactions by phone, in person or through remote participation tools such as webcams or iPads.

Offer language assistance to families with limited English proficiency, especially in critical phases of care.

- Provide translation and multi-lingual materials
- Use a translator on rounds
- Seek language concordance between providers and families

ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

Provide routine social services screening for all families at the beginning of their NICU stay.

- Identify vulnerable families needing support for transportation, parking, food and space or resources for sibilings and provide needed support.
- Be cognizant that some families may not be comfortable asking for these services outright.

COUNSELING

Conduct a standardized assessment of families' social determinants of health and provide tailored psychosocial support.

- Employ personnel such as social workers, counselors, therapists, and family navigators to provide this support

FAMILY LEADERSHIP

Employ a paid family advisor and/or family advisory council to provide the hospital and NICU with input on issues regarding caring for a baby in the NICU.

- Recruit diverse families that are representative of the families you serve linguistically, racial/ethnically or otherwise.

Develop a hospital-based peer to peer support program that employs family navigators to help families.

- Ensure materials are presented to families in their language of preference.
- Offer educational resources to families before birth when a NICU stay is anticipated.

EDUCATION

Develop targeted multi-lingual and culturally appropriate education and support for families on the health benefits of breastfeeding for mothers and preterm babies.

- Provide breastfeeding supplies for mothers who cannot afford them and a comfortable space for pumping while at the NICU.

Develop standardized multi-lingual and culturally appropriate education on positive touch and kangaroo care.

- Ensure staff is properly trained and educated on their value

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