Support for NICU and Pediatric Patients and Their Caregivers

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Focus Areas of Support

• Perinatal Care Unit (PCU) or other areas for Antepartum
  - Assessment, Supportive Therapy, Recommendations
    - Pregnancy Complications/High-Risk Pregnancy
    - Maternal Physical and Mental Illness
    - Preterm Delivery Expected
    - Extended Hospital Stay/Bed Rest

Focus Areas of Support

• Labor & Delivery
  - Assessment, Supportive Therapy, Recommendations
    - Maternal Mental Illness
    - Fetal Demise/Stillbirth
    - Unexpected Complications/Trauma
Focus Areas of Support

- **Postpartum/Mother-Baby Floor**
  - Assessment, Supportive Therapy, Recommendations
  - Maternal Mental Illness
  - Postpartum Mental Health Education
  - Adoption Support

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Focus Areas of Support

- **Neonatal Intensive Care Unit/Intensive Care Nursery (NICU/ICN)**
  - Family Support
  - Premature Birth with Anticipated Long NICU Stay
  - Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)
  - Syndromes and Dysmorphic Features
  - Death of Twin, Triplet, etc.
  - Surgical Procedures
  - Traumatic Birth
  - Caregiver Mental Illness (including PPD Screenings with EPDS)
  - Continuation of Care (ex. PICU during pregnancy to NICU following birth)

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Focus Areas of Support

- **Pediatric Floor and Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU)**
  - Assessment, Individual and Family Therapy, Recommendations
  - Mental Illness/Suicide attempt
  - Chronic Illness
  - Non-compliance with Medical Treatment
  - Supportive Therapy
  - Family/Caregiver Support
Acute and Prolonged Stressors in NICU/ICN

- Unknown Future
- Transportation issues/Housing issues
- Financial issues
- Employment issues
- Relationship strain
- Poor Sleep Hygiene
- Poor Diet
- Postpartum Depression in Mothers
- Depression in Fathers and other family members
- General Anxiety for parents and families
- Death of child
- Bereavement on many levels
- Loss of ideal pregnancy/birth/future
- Going home without baby
- Loss of confidence in having a healthy baby
- Loss of, or significant fear of, having more children
- Anticipatory grief
- Decision making
- Family Support Team separation
- Difficulty with acceptance
- Unknown future
- Transportation issues/Housing issues
- Financial issues
- Employment issues
- Relationship strain
- Depression & Anxiety in Caregivers
- Poor Self-Care in Caregivers
- Bereavement on many levels
- Decision Making
- Limited support
- Hopelessness about improvement
- Difficulty with acceptance
- New/worsening conditions
- Prolonged/multiple hospitalizations
- Caregiver burnout
- Development of mental illness in children
- Suicidality, ideation, and/or attempts
- Poor coping in child as well as caregiver
- History of trauma
- Poor child/caregiver relationship and/or communication
- Disbelief

How Can Mental Health Providers Assist with These Patients and Families?

- Provide support from the beginning of the hospital stay
- Provide continuity of care and support throughout and across hospital stays
- Educate caregivers on the decision-making process and provide support throughout that process as needed
- Mediate and/or liaise between caregivers and treatment team
- Mediate between family members
- Participate in care conferences
- Screen for depression and anxiety
How Can Mental Health Providers Assist with These Patients and Families?

- Provide Outpatient and/or Inpatient Referrals for Mental Health Needs
- Assist with Creating Behavior Plans
- Assist with Creating Safety Plans
- Provide Family and Social Interventions to Allow Nurses to Focus on Patient Care
- General Mental/Behavioral Health Consultation as Needed

CoxHealth Psychological Services

- Located on the 7th Floor of the Wheeler Heart & Vascular Center on the corner of Primrose and National Ave.
- Phone: 417-269-6891
- 3 Health Psychologists and 1 LPC on Staff at Cox South Hospital for Inpatient Care and Support
- 16 Other Psychologists, LPCs, PLPCs, and LCSWs Providing Inpatient and/or Outpatient Care
- Outpatient Care is Limited to Medically Based Behavioral Health Care

Other Resources for Support

- High Risk Hope – www.highriskhope.org
- Education and resources for high-risk pregnancy and NICU parents
- Postpartum Support International – www.postpartum.net
- Education and resources for Perinatal Mental Health issues
- Graham’s Foundation – www.grahamsfoundation.org
- NICU Parent Support
- Support 4 NICU Parents – www.support4nicuparents.org
- NICU Parent Support
- NICU Helping Hands – www.nicuhelpinghands.org
- NICU Parent Support
- Pediatric Chronic Illness Resources and Parent Support
- KidsHealth – www.kidshealth.org
- Pediatric Chronic Illness Resources and Parent Support
References