



**Oscar G. and Elsa S. Mayer Family Foundation
2010 Final Report**

It is with great pleasure that we submit the final report on the progress of the March of Dimes NICU Family Support® program at Memorial Health University Medical Center in Savannah, Georgia. The program provides education, information and comfort to families during the NICU hospitalization. We are grateful to the Mayer Family Foundation for your financial support over the past two years which has allowed these services to be provided.

2010 was an impressive year for the NICU Family Support® program and Memorial Health University Medical Center NICN. In this report we want to take the opportunity to emphasize our partnership. The following are specific and detailed outcomes used to evaluate the progress of the program:

A desired Outcome of NICU Family Support Program is to:

Provide information and comfort to families during the NICU hospitalization of their newborn, during the transition home and in the event of a newborn death.

Achieved Outcome:

The goal was to provide 80% of NICU families with a Parent Care Kit. Through the first 6 months a total of 291 kits were distributed (287 in English and 4 in Spanish). This represented 100 per cent of NICU families receiving a Parent Care Kit, based on the average daily census (39.21). During the second half of the year, 270 Parent Care Kits were distributed, again representing 100 per cent of NICU families receiving a Parent Care Kit. During 2010 a total of 561 kits were distributed (554 in English and 7 in Spanish).

Achieved Outcome:

During the first half of the year, the target goal of 60% was met by providing NICU families with at least one bedside visit within 72 hours of admission. During the second half of the year, only 47% of NICU families were provided with a bedside visit within 72 hours of admission. Our goal of 60% was not met. However, a majority of the NICU families received a face to face visit from the specialist at some point during their baby's hospitalization. For our families in outlying areas, the baby may be admitted to the NICU several days before the mother is discharged from the outlying hospital and so she may not be at bedside within 72 hours of the baby's admission.

Achieved Outcome:

A total of 82 parent activity hours (6.8 activities per month vs. the target of 3) were offered during the year with 672 parents and family members being touched by these activities. The Parent Hour topics include: Bringing Baby Home; 10 Important Things You Need to Know... before Taking Your Baby Home / Risk Reduction; Car Seat Safety; Speech & Language Development; Infant Massage; Scrap Booking; Crocheting for Your Baby; Financial Information from the Hospital; Journey Beads; and Lunch & Learn – Infection Control at Home.

Achieved Outcome:

The NICU Family Support Specialist completed training for two graduate NICU parents to provide bedside services to NICU families through Parent 2 Parent Volunteer service. Their services has been a valuable contribution the families as well as a help to the NICU staff. A third graduate parent completing training and will be an active volunteer when her background checks are completed.

Achieved Outcome:

Parent satisfaction surveys are provided to families after each Parent Hour. Families are asked to rank the Parent Hour as excellent, good, fair or poor. During the first six months of this year, 87% of the parents gave a rating of excellent and 11% gave a rating of good. No one gave a rating of fair or poor. During the second half of the year, 83% of the parents responding rated the Parent Hours as excellent and 14% rated them as good. Three per cent of the parents responding rated that Parent Hours as fair. Below is a selection of some of the comments received from July through December:

- It was a good experience. I learned a lot.
- A very good learning experience about vaccinations and viruses
- It made me feel great to meet other mothers who are experiencing the same thing as me.
- Amazing – I look forward to everyone (Lunch & Learn - Parent Hour)
- Nice. Provided time to feel happy about what your baby has accomplished (Journey Beads)
- Told me some things I needed to know before my baby comes home.
- It was comforting to see that I was not alone in this NICU experience.

We currently have three fully implemented Program Modules which steer the focus of the Parent Hours and other services provided to families.

Family Empowerment

- To empower families in the NICU to participate in their baby's care, be an advocate for their newborn, and be a member of the healthcare team.
- This year's highlight: Started Meet and Greet as a monthly parent hour which enables staff and both current and graduate families to interact. This parent hour also serves as an opportunity to encourage families' involvement in the health care team as well as their newborn's care.

Rural/Outlying Families

- To provide emotional and informational support for families from rural or outlying area.
- This year's highlight: Completion of "Welcome to Savannah and the NICU," a booklet for NICU families.

Photography

- To weave photography throughout the NICU experience and provide lasting keepsakes for families.
- This year's highlights: Including magnetic frames decorated by local Brownie troop in Parent Care Kits.

The **Second Desired Outcome** of NICU Family Support is to contribute to NICU staff professional development.

Achieved Outcome:

The March of Dimes NICU Family Support Project provided staff development for 19 nurses at the National Neonatal Nurses Conference in Savannah, GA, September 12-15, 2010. The staff who attended stated that the training they received was excellent and they planned to share what they had learned with staff who did not attend. Several of the sessions focused on Family Centered Care and Kangaroo/Skin to Skin Care.

The philosophy of "family centered care" is the **Third Desired Outcome/Goal**. Family Centered Care includes the importance of bonding, attachment, developing comfort with the infant, a stable family unit, readiness for reading, and good communication skills.

Achieved Outcome:

A total of 672 NICU parents were served through 82 educational and supportive activities which are all geared to supporting the principles of family centered care. Staff who attended the National Neonatal Nurses Conference in September of 2010 received more training focusing on Family Centered Care.

Collaborative Partnerships

The following partnerships bring visibility and support to the program. Through these partnerships we are able to maximize our resources, enabling us to provide more services to the NICU families. The partnerships also help to point out the needs of the NICU families to the community.

- **Angel House Café** –donated meals for Parent Hour and gave discounted rate for CNAC luncheon
- **NICU Staff Discharge Planner** – Worked closely with the NICU Family Support specialist brainstorming new ideas and services for parents, with special focus on encouraging NICU parents

to participate in Kangaroo Care which aids in their ability to pump breast milk and/or breast feed their babies.

- **NICU nurses and support staff** – NICU staff continued to lead Parent Hours, encouraged parents to attend Parent Hours, alerted the NICU Family Support specialist when new families were admitted, and provided ideas for additional services.
- **Neonatologists** – Two neonatologists served on the advisory CNAC and three shared in leading the Infection Control Parent Hour twice a month.
- **NICU Social Workers** – the two NICU social workers partnered with the NICU Family Support specialist to provide the best resources to the families in the NICU.
- **Local Girl Scout troop** - painted magnetic frames for Parent Care Kits.
- **Bull Street Baptist Church WMU** – provided blankets throughout the year for families and provided purple blankets during Prematurity Awareness Month (November).
- **Hospital Administration** – met with March of Dimes Staff and Senior Management Team to explore NICU Family Support Program enhancements.

Additional Accomplishments

In the final quarter of the year, the NICU Family Support Specialist began collaborating with the NICN Dietician, Discharge Planner, Lactation Consultant, and other NICU team members to develop a plan to encourage NICU mothers to participate in Kangaroo Care and increase the number of mothers who are breast feeding their babies at discharge. Plans included providing additional education for families and staff around the benefits of kangaroo care and breast feeding for the baby and the parent and developing a March of Dimes Parent Hour that would support this purpose. A support group model seemed to best fit the Parent Hour need and a goal was set to offer the first support group for mother's in mid-January of 2011.

Sources were secured from volunteers and a local restaurant to provide meals for NICU families twice a month for Lunch & Learn – Infection Control Parent Hour.

52 volunteers served throughout the year in various capacities.

A weeklong observance of Prematurity Awareness in November in the hospital cafeteria area provided additional visibility and recognition for the March of Dimes and our mission.

In September, the NICN staff was provided weeklong recognition and treats in honor of National Neonatal Nurses week.

Books and magazines for leisure reading continue to be provided on a borrow/swap/take basis for NICN parents in the NICN waiting area.

Barriers and Challenges

- Training began for six new Parent 2 Parent volunteers in 2009. In the first quarter of 2010, two of these parents were able to complete the training. A third parent completed the training in the fall. Scheduling the training at a convenient time for more than one parent was difficult and in the end, one parent received her final session individually. Challenges continue for these mothers to find the time to come into the NICU on a regular basis. Two of the mothers have twins and work a full time job. The other mother has one young child and is a full time student. They have been able to come on an as needed basis and work hard at participating as their schedules permit. Parents of NIUC graduates have valuable experience; however, their responsibilities as a parent of a NICU infant makes it difficult for them to serve as Parent 2 Parent volunteers.
- Seeing parents at bedside within 72 hours of their baby's birth continues to be a challenge for several reasons. The NICU Family Support Specialist role is a part time position. Memorial is a regional hospital and many of the parents live in outlying areas, several hours away. Many mothers may deliver in an outlying hospital and may not be released for a few days. Many parents have inadequate resources to be at the bedside on a regular basis. Parents often have limited transportation to come to the hospital. In addition, space is limited at The Ronald McDonald House for parents to stay (parents of the most fragile infants are given priority). With that said most parents receive a personal visit at bedside or through a Parent Hour from the NICU FS Specialist during their babies' hospital stay.
- In December of 2009, our site was notified that we were chosen by the National March of Dimes office as one of ten roll out sites in 2010 for a new "Close to Me-Kangaroo Care Module." Three of the ten sites would be chosen to participate in a pre and post evaluation of the module and the new

module could not be implemented until those three sites were chosen. In August of 2010 it was confirmed that our site would not be a test site. As part of being chosen, a large portion of the materials needed to implement the module would be provided at no charge. The materials were received in the beginning of 2011.

Continued Action Steps:

- Continue distribution of Parent Care Kits to 80% or more of families in the NICU
- Implement the new Close to Me-Kangaroo Care module
- Continue collaboration and plans with NICU staff to encourage Kangaroo Care and Breast Feeding
- Establish weekly schedule for Kangaroo Care/Breast feeding Support Parent Hour
- Continue to offer quality, diverse Parent Hours each month focusing on the needs of the families
- Continue to offer NICU staff professional development
- Secure donations of two meals each month from community resources for Lunch & Learn
- Secure continued funding through foundation grants, donations, or fundraising activities

Lessons Learned

- Families learn from both structural activities and informal social opportunities which has made having that balance of activities so important. People learn in different ways and desire different information at different times. In order to meet the needs of the families the NICU, the Family Support Specialist provides individualized service.
- Parents participate in Parent Hours after encouragement and as they become more confident in their surroundings.
- It has been critical to provide support to the NICU staff to participate and attend activities and in turn they have encouraged families to take advantage of the services offered.
- NICU staff desires to spend time with families but due to taking care of the needs of the infant they often do not have the ability. The Family Support Specialist provides this support that staff is unable to provide.
- The Chapter Neonatal Action Committee (CNAC) is a dynamic, inspiring group made up of both staff and families who come together as peers to discuss the direction of the program and provide a venue for the families to express their wishes and help others.

With the collaboration of Memorial Health University Medical Center and the generosity of Mayer Family Foundation, NICU Family Support® is able to provide information and comfort to NICU families, regardless of the infant's diagnosis or outcome. While NICU family Support® makes available informative and caring materials to NICU families, its service component is what makes it unique. Under the guidance of the March of Dimes NICU Family Support Specialist, volunteers, staff, and graduate NICU parents, the program is able to give much needed assistance to families experiencing stress of a NICU hospitalization.

We know that our collaborative efforts have supported and empowered NICU families during an extremely difficult time, and this program has a lasting impact on babies and families. It has been an honor for the March of Dimes to partner with The Mayer Family Foundation and Memorial Health University Medical Center in this innovative program. For more information, please do not hesitate to contact Kandi Spencer, LPC, Director of Program Services at 404-350-9800 or kspencer@marchofdimes.com.

Mayer Grant Final 2010 Budget Report

Total Request Amount: received: \$30,000.00
 Total Program Cost: \$60,000.00

Budget Breakdown:

	Total	Expended:
Salary	\$31,240.00	\$35,299.00
Benefits	\$9,684.00	\$11,429.00
Postage	\$50.00	\$109.00
Travel and Lodging	\$1,500.00	\$921.00
Printing and Supplies	\$8,526.00	\$4,478.00
Professional Fees	\$6,000.00	\$6,056.00
Conferences and Meetings	\$3,000.00	\$ 621.00
Total	\$60,000.00	\$58,984

