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Improving quality of care and survival beyond newborn period through family centered care (FCC) approach

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Problem statement: Suboptimal neonatal staff ratios continue to obstruct delivery of quality care to sick neonates. Strategic low cost innovations are needed to overcome the universal problem of human resource constraints if we are to dent the global neonatal health outcomes favorably especially in the resource limited countries.

Innovative intervention: We translated and adapted principles of family centered care (FCC) for overcoming health workforce shortages in delivery of neonatal care at facility level. We pioneered and developed a unique simplified comprehensive audio visual training package' for capacity building of the parent-attendants. This audio-video training tool is sequentially structured to cover domains of hand washing and entry protocol, providing developmentally supportive care and activities of routine care to their sick neonate, kangaroo mother care, feeding (technique of breast feeding, expression of breast milk and assisted feeding of a low birth weight baby), danger signs recognition and post discharge care of the baby at home. Also a training guide and operational guidelines for operationalization of family centered care of newborn has been developed. This training package has been developed for the purpose of capacity building of parents-attendants accompanying the sick babies admitted to newborn care units.

Results: The intervention decreased the hospitalization duration, improved the exclusive breast feeding rates before discharge without increasing nosocomial infection rates.

Conclusion: FCC is a low cost simple innovative approach for improving quality of care to hospitalized neonates. FCC supplements manpower shortage in nursery, creates an environment that is developmentally supportive for the sick baby, culturally sensitive and responsive to family needs.

Future: Implementation of this indigenously developed innovation would thus also be the cornerstone of continuum of care at home, ultimately resulting in improved health outcomes of the newborns.

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