



Strengthening community and support from NICU to home for Black and Latino families: A Community-Based Participatory Research Pilot

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Background

- Perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs) are more prevalent in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)
- Racial disparities in PMAD screening and treatment
- NICU peer groups benefit (general population):
 - Reduced sense of isolation and anxiety
- Types of peer support studied in the general NICU population:
 - Direct one-on-one peer support
 - In-person group support groups
 - Virtual internet support groups
- Favorable results for racially concordant peer support in other areas (breastfeeding and cancer survivorship)
- Families from marginalized communities recommendations for peer support in qualitative research

Objective

Evaluate attendance of culturally concordant peer support group sessions for Black and Latino families who have or had an infant in a NICU in our collaborative.

Design/Methods

- Community-based participatory feasibility study
- Collaboration between
 - Four NICUs, two level IV, two level III
 - Two governmentally funded community organizations that serve families of color
 - Family advisory council
- Program/research team
 - Community leaders, pediatric doctors (neonatologists, pediatric trainees), social workers, psychologists, medical students, masters students, March of Dimes family support leader
- Study period: August 2023 to January 2024
- Inclusion criteria
 - Infant currently or previously admitted to the NICU
 - Self-identify as Black/African American or Latino/Hispanic
 - Spanish or English language preference
- Session format
 - Monthly, hybrid (virtual or in person)
 - Racially, ethnically, linguistically concordant groups, including community organization members and mental health provider
- Data collected
 - Attendance
 - Participant family role
 - Session characteristics
- Data analysis: Descriptive statistics

Results

- Sessions completed: 12
 - 6 for Black/African American families
 - 6 for Spanish-language preferred Latino families
- Session characteristics:
 - Average duration: 81 minutes
 - Total attendances: 61
 - Range of attendances per session: 2-6
 - Virtual attendance: 55.3%
 - In person attendance: 44.7%
 - Families whose infant was discharged at time of session: 58.3%
 - Families whose infant was still admitted at time of session: 41.7%

Table 1: Session attendance characteristics

	Black Peer Session	Spanish-language Peer Session
Total sessions	6	6
Total attendances	28	33
Mothers	25	27
Fathers	3	6

Conclusion

- Adjustments to peer group suggested and implemented by community partners
- Attendance achieved at every session
- Results reflect importance of continuing to offer the session to families whose infant has been discharged from the NICU
- Virtual attendance accounted for over half of attendances signifying benefit of hybrid format
- Future directions
 - Assessment of session satisfaction
 - Pre-post assessment of parental stress and sense of belonging
 - Qualitative interviews for more in-depth understanding of benefit of session and recommendations for improvement
 - Vermont Oxford Network infant outcomes

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