



**Service Priorities and Programmes**  
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**A pilot study on the use of Infant Diary to enhance parents' involvement and promote family centered care in NICU Introduction**

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**Introduction**

Reported from WHO (WHO, 2016), nearly 15 million premature infants are born annually, which account for one tenth of the total newborns. Hospitalization of premature infants is inevitable due to the need for intensive care for long period, which leads to high level of stress, anxiety and depression in parents resulting from the separation of parents and infants. Family-centered care, an approach to optimize medical care which is governed by mutually beneficial partnerships between health care providers, patients and families, is recommended as one of the effective interventions to reduce complications followed by intense level of parental stress and anxiety. Infant Diary was developed as a tool to enhance parents' involvement in NICU and promote family centered care.

**Objectives**

The objectives are 1) Enhance parents' knowledge about the babies' condition  
2) Increase parents' involvement in caretaking to improve the parental satisfaction and self-confidence in their role.

**Methodology**

Infant Diary composed of 8 components including 1) Cover page with infant's nickname, date of birth and simple anthropometric data 2) Monthly calendar, habit tracker, spare space for remark and notice board 3) Photo frame 4) Things to ask 5) Useful hotline and website 6) Graduation certificate 7) Transparent folder to keep the fact sheet of procedures, vaccination card and appointment slip and 8) Stickers. It is completed by parents and nurses and is used to alleviate the parental stress, fear and uncertainty. Milestones of infants' life can also be illustrated in the Infant Diary. Patients gestation less than 32 weeks and body weight less than 1.5kg were divided as Control group (no Infant Diary were distributed to parents) and Intervention group (Infant Diary were distributed to parents). A survey including five areas using Parental Stressor Scale: Neonatal Intensive Unit (PSS-NICU), developed by Miles and Funk

(1993), was used in this study.

Parental stress level was measured and compared among control group and intervention group.

### **Result**

From September 2017 to November 2017, seven cases were studied. In the area of sights and sounds, the stress level reduced in the five parameters in Post-test group when comparing to that with Pre-test group. A significant decrease in stress level regarding cessation of breathing and sudden colour change was revealed in Post-test group in the area of baby looks and behaves. Last but not least, those parents with Infant Diary felt more connected with their babies and less stress resulting from separation from babies. The results suggested that Infant Diary is an effective tool to enhance patient involvement and based on the concept of family centered care to reduce parents' stress level.