

Collaborative Consultation for Family-Centered Care



The Close Collaboration with Parents is a training program for the multiprofessional health care teams of neonatal intensive care units. The goal of the program is to change the care culture in a unit in order to include parents as partners in the care of a hospitalized newborn. The program aims to increase staff's skills to collaborate with parents and, thereby, facilitate care culture that supports parenting and parent-infant bonding.

The Close Collaboration with Parents is an intensive one-and-half-years long training process for a neonatal intensive care unit. Beginning of the training needs to be based on the commitment of whole staff and leadership of the unit. The program consists of four different theoretical phases with different teaching goals. Each phase utilizes different learning modalities: theory, hand-on practicing, and reflection. The teaching begins from learning to observe infant behavior, through watching infants with parents, then empathizing with differences in families and ends in collaborative planning of the infant's care and family's transition from hospital to home.

Zack Boukydis was one of the three developers of the Close Collaboration with Parents training program. Initially the training program was developed between 2009-2012 for the NICU at Turku University Hospital to prepare the staff for transition to single-family room unit. After unit's good experiences the other units in Finland become interested in the program. The program has expanded to 10 Finnish NICUs by 2016 and first international training will start in Norway autumn 2016. At the moment, training material is available in English and Finnish. There are on-going research projects to evaluate scientifically the effectiveness of the Close Collaboration with Parents program.

More information:

Axelin A, Ahlqvist-Bjorkroth S, Kauppila W, Boukydis Z, Lehtonen L. Nurses' Perspectives on the Close Collaboration with Parents Training Program in the NICU. *MCN, American Journal of Maternal Child Nursing*: 2014;39(4), 260–268. doi: 10.1097/NMC.0000000000000061

Ahlqvist-Björkroth S, Boukydis Z, Axelin A, Lehtonen L. Close Collaboration with Parents™ intervention to improve parents' psychological well-being and child development: Description of the intervention and study protocol. *Behavioural Brain Research*: online October 2016.

<http://www.vsshp.fi/en/toimipaikat/tyks/to8/to8b/vvm/Pages/default.aspx#horizontaali2>