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Florence Nightingale Grants and Award Recipient Report

Undertaking Family Integrated Neurodevelopmental Education (FINE 2)

Preterm infants are born during critical periods of brain development. There is increasing evidence that early life stress harms the developing central nervous system and brain. Neurodevelopmental care is an approach to individualise care of preterm infants to maximise neurological development, reduce long-term cognitive and behavioural problems. The aim of neurodevelopmental care is to implement modifications to the nursery environment and care practices to reduce stress on infants and families and promote normal neurological development.

Funding from Florence Nightingale Award 'Returned Sisters Memorial Grant' allowed 8 experienced NPICU nurses to undertake FINE 2 (Family Integrated Neurodevelopmental Education), empowering them to develop leadership and innovation in neurodevelopmental care in NPICU. Without this grant NPICU would not have been able to support this training. It has proven to be invaluable with the move to K block. 'Family Integrated' or 'Fi-Care', which enables parents to become true partners in the care of their baby is being implemented.

FINE 2 graduates are leading the way in:

- Educating and supporting staff on the floor
- Supportive 'four handed care'
- Understanding behavioural cues and how to respond to them
- Partnering with parents in the care of their infants
 - Reading to babies: an activity in that parents can do every day for their baby during a time where many feel helpless in an intense and stressful environment. Reading is also linked to improved language and writing abilities at school age
 - Kangaroo (skin-to-skin) care: Kangaroo care or skin to skin helps babies to grow, stabilises vital signs, and they also sleep for longer
 - The move to K block has meant that each family has its own room, parents are being supported in becoming more involved with their babies -staying with their babies; learning about their baby's behavioural cues and adapting their care

