

### Alternate NICU Observation Experience Assignment

1. NICU Training Scenario: Cincinnati Children's (<9 mins)

Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRRgpgHNA1M&feature=youtu.be>. Reflect on what you learned from watching this video.

- ◇ After watching this video, I learned that it is very important to keep the parents/family up to date when it comes to their baby in the NICU. A lot of parents are waiting on a full update from the current nurse to see how their baby is doing because for the most part it is a very stressful situation. It is also important to have your personal conversations away from parents/family because you never know what all is going on in their life. Like yes, our job is to be there in the hospital so you don't really have a choice but to conversate about things going on in your life, but there are certain times and places that you should do that; just out of respect for your patient and family. Another huge thing I learned from this, is to always be sensitive to giving updates and not be in such a hurried mood or being short with the parents; those updates mean the world to them & can make their day go a little smoother when they know what is going on. You don't want to cause more stress for family because they are already going through a lot.

2. Watch the following videos that relate to the NICU. Reflect on what you observed and learned.

- a. Tour of the NICU (< 5 mins) Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ofs9d8f2IGM&feature=youtu.be>.

- ◇ This video was pretty cool to watch! There were so many things that I wouldn't have even thought of to put in the NICU. The fact that they have their own milk room where they can even engineer milk products for babies is AWESOME. That takes off so much stress for moms if they are having trouble with milk. They took into account everything needed to keep down the noise levels for babies; even installed lights to let you know when you are getting too loud! I love that they have single pt rooms, but also have rooms with other pts in it too because they could support each other if needed.

- b. Equipment (<7 mins) Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QphHYiqRJUl&feature=youtu.be>.

Reflect on what you learned from watching this video.

- ◇ It is interesting to see all the equipment that is needed in the NICU. I can see why it would be overwhelming for families if they didn't understand what each thing was for and why it is needed for their infant. Being able to visualize each piece of equipment through this video has helped me put together what I learned in lecture with what I was shown here. It is crazy to me to see how small a vent tube is for a baby in the NICU! Also, each piece of equipment is vital to each pt in the NICU; they have some things that are just standard in each room, but it pretty cool to see everything they might use for a pt.

c. Admission to NICU, RNs (13 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1CPPM-IV56Q>

- ◇ The admission process is very lengthy but I understand why that is. Each portion of this process is important because your baby's life depends on the care that you give them from the beginning; forgetting one little thing in this process could mean your baby isn't getting the best care & could have a negative impact. There are some pretty cool features to the giraffe that I didn't know about; it's actually pretty fancy & handy! It is ALWAYS important to warm up the bed prior your pt arriving so you don't pull heat away from your baby in that process. Making sure you have a baseline before calling the dr to confirm orders is also very important because it can tell us later on if something is normal or not. You want to make sure that you don't leave the thermometer in the bed because it will heat up! A good rule of thumb is to connect all your leads, O2 pulse oximeter, BP cuff, & temperature probe before your pt arrives so that all you have to do is connect them; lets you focus more on your pt's condition rather than trying to do a lot at once

d. A day of life in NICU parents (10minutes) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R\\_ldpul2two](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R_ldpul2two)  
not available to watch.

**The following Questions/Answers have two parts.**

3. Discuss medication safety in this patient population. What are the considerations for safe medication administration to this vulnerable population?

- ◇ Medication safety for the population that surrounds NICU is crucial. With administering medications to infants, you have to be very careful, so not only do you have to be careful, you have to be extra careful & make sure that you are double checking your calculations & dosages. One little drop extra could mean drastic changes for these little babies. Their dosages are usually pretty small so you have to make sure that you are using the proper equipment needed for each medication administration; being very detail oriented is helpful. Most of the babies in NICU have underdeveloped organs, so that makes it hard for them to filter out drugs that are put into their system. You have to understand that dilution is key for pediatrics in general, but especially in this population due to most being premature.

4. Review: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5856604/> : Parent Participation in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit: Predictors and Relationships to Neurobehavior and Developmental Outcomes. Reflect on social situations seen in the NICU and differences in parent involvement in the NICU. Provide a discussion/reflection on both.

- ◇ Before reading this article, I had a good theory about whether having an involved parent or not affects the baby in NICU; turns out, this article supports my theory! There are many social factors that influence babies in the NICU, but most of them can be controlled to an extent. There are always plenty of noises, lights, people talking, equipment being moved around, and etc, but there are interventions we can do to help ease the stressors of the NICU environment. In the article it states, "Parent participation in the NICU, which includes parent presence & infant holding, can promote feeling of usefulness & can improve attachment. Parents can also help to improve the ability of the infant to cope with NICU

stressors and provide appropriate, meaningful sensory stimuli and human contact... skin-to-skin care, is related to decreased acute pain responses, improved weight gain, improved infant growth and development, etc., and end up with better cognitive outcomes in childhood, and enhanced nurturing and parent-child interactions.” It also states, “...high maternal involvement in the NICU has been related to superior cognitive and language outcomes in early childhood.” Overall, what I got from this article, is that no matter the medical state of your baby in NICU, always try to find ways to participate in the care of them because even just touching their hand or holding them closely can greatly improve their overall health. It has been shown it improves neurobehavioral outcomes and developmental outcomes as well.

5. Explain how the nurse and unit alters the environment to reduce infant stimuli and promote health for the NICU baby.

- ◇ There are many different ways that the nurse and unit together can alter the environment to reduce infant stimuli and promote health for them, but here are a few: reducing the lights around the NICU, reducing sounds (the closing of doors, no TVs, no loud music, not conversating too loud, having single pt rooms if available), and reducing how much you move them because you could be pulling heat from them doing certain procedures. There are certain pieces of equipment that are useful in the aid of keeping babies in a less stimulated environment and also certain nonpharmacologic interventions like placing them in a certain position for comfort that also aids in their healing process (could help them breathe better). The nurse could come in quietly, minimize movement of the infant, and also do cluster care so that the baby doesn't get messed with 4 or 5 times throughout an hour when they could be sleeping/resting. It is all about what benefits your baby in the NICU and what works for each one individually.

6. What are the criteria for discharge from the NICU from the caregiver's perspective? <https://www.ahrq.gov/sites/default/files/publications/files/nicutoolkit.pdf>

- ◇ Obtain insurance coverage
- ◇ Identify a pediatrician & make a follow up appointment
- ◇ Schedule appointments with specialists for the infant's diagnoses
- ◇ Make sure to do hands-on teaching for the individuals unique diagnosis
- ◇ Receive a NICU discharge summary from doctor or NP

7. What are the criteria for discharge from the NICU from a parent's perspective?

Review: <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/143/6/e20182915>

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/milestones-a-nicu-baby-must-reach-before-discharge-2748598>

<https://www.verywellfamily.com/the-ultimate-guide-for-taking-your-preemie-home-4056253>

- ◇ Support group information
- ◇ Car seat safety
- ◇ Understanding signs and symptoms of illness
- ◇ Medications and immunizations

- ◇ Feeding
- ◇ Parental self assessment of discharge readiness
- ◇ The basics of changing diapers, baths, swaddling, and how to do CPR

8. What do you think are some of the challenges of being a NICU nurse? What are some of the most rewarding things about being a NICU nurse? Review these videos and reflect on what you saw in the first video (training scenarios) also. Be prepared to discuss your thoughts.

NICU Nurse Sandy (5 minutes) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X\\_tQtLMo3qY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_tQtLMo3qY)

Tiffany RN a 12- hour night shift for NICU (15 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qy6LnAByZo4>

- ◇ I think that there are a lot of challenges when it comes to being a NICU nurse. There is always going to be something keeping you on your toes; these babies depend on you to keep them going! You really have to get to know the babies that you're taking care of because they are all unique & that can aid your care that you give them; you get to know what their cues are. You have to constantly be critically thinking about what you are going to do if certain things happen; you have to be prepared for the worst. In the NICU there is so much going on so you have to prioritize what is most important and how to handle crazy situations with a calm manner. You also need to be able to keep your emotions in check because you have to be strong for those parents and pts.
- ◇ There are so many things that are rewarding about being a NICU nurse. You get to make sure these babies heal and go home to their families where they belong. Some other things are like them reaching their small goals at the hospital like going from TPN to being able to breastfeed. That's a huge goal and gives you so much satisfaction! You end up building a connection with your babies in NICU so that makes you want to get them better, faster, especially for the parents at the bedside.