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IM 8 Midterm Clinical Reflection

During my preceptorship in the NICU, I have felt a mixture of awe and anxiety. Being surrounded by such fragile lives has been incredibly humbling. I came into this rotation confident in newborn assessments, strict infection prevention, and family-centered care. But the NICU has challenged me in new ways. I have noticed that I still need to strengthen my skills with specialized equipment and learn to stay calm in unexpected situations.

During my second shift in the NICU, I experienced my first circumcision. I was in the room during three different procedures, two of them being my patients. A few hours after the procedure, what began as routine observation quickly turned into an emergency. During a scheduled diaper change on the patient who had received his circumcision first that day, I noticed that his penis was bleeding much more than expected. Drawing on what I had learned in school, I was able to quickly realize that this patient had possibly not received his vitamin K shot at birth. Before the procedure, my nurse checked the patient's chart and paperwork we had received when the patient was transferred to us. The chart did not show he had gotten the shot, but there was a date and time written on the paperwork we received from KiteFlight that stated this baby had received the shot. We were able to determine that the crew had gotten wrong information from the hospital the patient was transferred from. Recognizing this connection and bringing it to the attention of my preceptor really reinforced how essential critical thinking and attention to detail are in patient safety. It was a defining moment for me.

Throughout my experience in this unit this far, I have learned the importance of trusting my instincts and communicating clearly with my nurse and the providers. Moving forward, I plan to use this experience in my own practice. Staying observant, asking questions, and never underestimating even the smallest details can mean all the difference when taking care of such tiny humans. As I approach graduation, my time in the NICU this far has deepened my confidence and my sense of purpose and has reminded me of why I chose this profession.