FEEDING DIFFICULTIES IN YOUNG PAEDIATRIC CARE SURVIVORS: A SCOPING REVIEW OF THE EVIDENCE

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Background

- The association between critical illness and feeding difficulties are well described in survivors of adult intensive care.
- Complex feeding disorders are described in children with congenital heart disease (CHD) and preterm infants, resulting in growth failure and significant parental anxiety.
- There is a paucity of evidence describing the prevalence of feeding difficulties amongst paediatric intensive care (PICU) survivors and subsequent impact on family life.

Aims

- To complete a scoping review of evidence describing feeding difficulties amongst PICU survivors.

Methods

- Advanced literature search : six electronic databases plus grey literature and cross-referencing.
- Publications were eligible if they reported feeding difficulties and parental experiences amongst PICU and preterm graduates.
- Following initial title and abstract review, two reviewers independently screened full-texted publications and extracted study data.

Results

- All eight papers reported feeding difficulties in young survivors of intensive care, however the definitions and prevalence varied considerably.
- No paper described feeding difficulties in previously well babies/children.
- Papers described feeding difficulties in preterm infants and those with congenital diseases such as congenital heart disease.

Figure 2: Overarching themes and interdependent relationships

Conclusions

There is limited evidence describing feeding difficulties amongst young survivors of intensive care. As the majority of PICU admissions are infants, there is a need to explore this further in order to describe the prevalence of feeding difficulties and develop appropriate toolkits to reduce the burden of feeding difficulties post-discharge, reducing health care utilisation and parental anxiety.

PAPERS INCLUDED IN SCOPING REVIEW

- Indramohan G, et al (2017) Identification of Risk Factors for Poor Feeding in Infants with Congenital Heart Disease and a Novel Approach to Improve Oral Feeding. Journal of pediatric nursing. 35:149-54.
- Ross ES (2013) Feeding Outcomes in Preterm Infants After Discharge From the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU): A Systematic Review. Newborn and Infant Nursing Reviews. 13(2):87-93.
- Lutz KF (2012) Feeding Problems of NICU and PICU Graduates: Perceptions of Parents and Providers. Newborn and infant nursing reviews : NAINR. 12(4):207-13.
- Swift MC, Scholten I (2010). Not feeding, not coming home: parental experiences of infant feeding difficulties and family relationships in a neonatal unit. Journal of clinical nursing. 19(1-2):249-58.
- Jadcherla SR et al (2009) Feeding abilities in neonates with congenital heart disease: a retrospective study. Journal of Perinatology. 29. 112-118.
- Kogon BE, et al (2007) Feeding difficulty in newborns following congenital heart surgery. Congenital heart disease. 2007;2(5):332-7.
- Einarson KD, Arthur HM (2003). Predictors of oral feeding difficulty in cardiac surgical infants. Pediatric nursing. 29(4):315-9.
- Hawdon et al (2000) Identification of neonates at risk of developing feeding problems in infancy. Developmental medicine and child neurology. 42(4):235-9.

Key research priorities

Identifying & defining feeding difficulties in young PICU survivors

Identifying risk factors

Effect of clinical care on feeding ability

Impact of feeding difficulties

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