

Peers supporting peers: Preterm mothers post discharge WhatsApp Support group experience

Preterm births are unanticipated demanding experience for families. Despite integration of mothers into their preemie care during admission and discharge criteria satisfied; replication of NICU staffs support at home is a crave by mothers. Post discharge mothers' challenges include concern for their babies' general wellbeing. These concerns result in lower breastfeeding rates, poor maternal-child bonding and poor mothers' mental health.

Preterms' mothers are ready to share, get information pertaining care of their babies. Recently,

preemies' mothers' support groups, blogs are on social media:

Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Pinterest and Instagram however most don't have personal touch. Only preterms' mothers comprehend the stress of caring for preemies

The purpose of study is to access benefits of post discharge Peers supporting Peers WhatsApp group of preemies' mothers with supervision of NICU Doctors and nurses

Methodology:

WhatsApp group was created 02/07/2020 for preemies' mothers with smart phones. They are added post discharge of their babies; NICU staffs added for supervision. Ground rules set and Purpose explained:

1) mothers supporting one another by sharing challenges, experiences. 2) Ask questions, other mothers answer, when no answer from peers; NICU staffs answer. 3) Share videos/pictures of babies' first birthday. Questionnaire using google form and link sent to group for mothers to fill after 17 months

Findings: 48 mothers added over 17 months, 23 filled the online questionnaire

Mothers mean age was 33.6 years. 91.3% and 8.6% had university/polytechnic and secondary school education respectively. 45% had preterms before and didn't have post discharge support except post discharge hospital follow-up visit

All mothers found: 1) questions asked or answered by peers or NICU staffs helpful, in reduction, of hospital visits. 2) First birthday's videos post motivating

They are ready to keep group to encourage other mothers.


Conclusion:

Support groups seems more effective when peers share their experience with one another.

Biography:

Osaretin Chimah has her passion in neonatal care especially for preterm babies. Her passion causes her to go miles to seek ways to improve their survivals despite some environmental limitations. She is passionate about quality improvement in workplace. Can it be better is always her slogan.

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