Improving Communication Given to Parents with Children Born Prematurely: A Systematic Review

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Abstract: Research has shown that, upon discharge of children born prematurely, parents do not think they have the abilities to care for their child without the staff and technology of the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) (Jefferies, 2014). After discharge, most preterm babies are followed by a neonatal follow-up program (NFUP). NFUPs provide assessment, monitoring, identification and early intervention for high-risk infants who have been cared for in a NICU (Provincial Council for Maternal and Child Health, 2015). NFUPs serve several purposes, one of which is to provide anticipatory guidance and teaching parents about their child's developmental patterns, thereby fostering parental resilience. Unfortunately, few parents remember the information given to them by health professionals during medical visits (McGrath, 2012). A systematic review will be conducted in order to collect evidence on preterm children development in the domains of language, feeding and cognition, from birth to school age. Several guides will be created in order to better educate and support parents of children born prematurely, during their visits to NFUPs.

Keywords: prematurity, language, feeding, play skills, parental communication, systematic review

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