**Compliance of Nurses with Neonatal Care Protocol regarding Feeding**

**of Neonates**

**Thesis**

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**By**

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**Summary**

Adequate neonatal nutrition is essential for appropriate growth and avoidance of complications associated with deficiencies. Optimal nutrition should be a consistent goal for each neonate, whether in a healthy newborn nursery or intensive-care unit **(ACOG, 2007)**. Nurses must be aware of their responsibilities to achieve competency in NICU toward neonatal care especially in feeding. According to the AAP all neonates should be breast feeding exclusively for first 6 months of life only when, there is no contraindication for it **(Guha et al., 2006 and** **WHO, 2013).**

Clinical guidelines improve the quality of care for neonates and improve clinical effectiveness by implementation of evidence-based care in daily practice **([Natsch](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed?term=Natsch%20S%5BAuthor%5D&cauthor=true&cauthor_uid=12623316)  &**  [**Meer,**](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed?term=van%20der%20Meer%20JW%5BAuthor%5D&cauthor=true&cauthor_uid=12623316)  **2003).**

The present study aimed to assess nurses' compliance with Neonatal Care protocol regarding feeding of neonates in NICU through assessment of nurses' knowledge regarding feeding of neonates and assessment of nurses' practices regarding feeding of neonates.

This study carried out in NICUs in Benisuef general Hospital & Ain shams (children hospital and maternity & gynecological hospital) affiliated to Ain shams University Hospital. In addition to the sample of this study include (50 nurses) worked in mentioned setting.

Data were collected by using two tools, a pre-designed questionnaire format to assess nurses’ knowledge and Observational checklists to assess their practices.

1- **A pre-designed questionnaire format**

It was designed and developed by the researcher in Arabic Language in form of open and closed questions which included three parts characteristics of nurses, nurses' knowledge regarding Neonatal Care Protocol and nurses' knowledge regarding neonatal feeding Indications, contraindications and complications for each type of feeding in neonate and care required for each type of feeding in neonate.

**2- Observational checklists**

It was adopted and modified by the researcher after reviewing the related procedures from [United States Agency for International Development](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/hs/index.html) (USAID). This tool used to assess the nursing practices related to neonatal feeding; it included (formula preparation, bottle feeding, gavage feeding and breast feeding)

**Field work:**

The actual field work started from March (2012) up to the end of August (2012) for data collection. The researcher was available 3 days/week throughout the three shifts, and started by introducing herself to the nurses then informing them about the purpose of study. They were met by the researcher at the end of each shift which was considered their available time for data collection (after providing nursing activities in the unit). Each nurse individually interviewed for about 20-30 minutes. As regards the nurse practices, they were observed in previously mentioned settings during their actual work in different shifts.

**The results of the study can be summarized as following:**

* More than half of the studied nurses (62 %) their age less than 30 years, while the minority of them (38%) their age was above 30 years.
* Less than half of studied nurses (42%) their experience less than 10 years.
* Half of them (50%) had poor level of total nurses knowledge regarding neonatal feeding.
* More than half of nurses (54%) performed incompetent level of practice regarding neonatal feeding.
* There was an insignificant difference between level of knowledge regarding neonatal feeding, years of experience and training program while there is a significant difference between level of knowledge regarding neonatal feeding and frequency of evaluation and age of nurses.
* There was an insignificant difference between level of practice and frequency of evaluation meanwhile; there was highly statistically significant difference between level of practice and location and authority of evaluation.
* There was a positive correlation between total knowledge and total practice with Neonatal Care Protocol.

**From the result of the present study, the following can be concluded**:

According to the research questions the study findings concluded that, half of nurses in NICU had a satisfactory level of knowledge regarding neonatal feeding, while less than half of them had un satisfactory level of practice toward feeding of neonates. This led to, nurses working in NICU as a critical unit care for high risk neonates considered not complied with the Neonatal Care Protocol.

**From the previous findings, the following recommendations can be suggested as:**

1. Periodical continuous on job training programs for neonatal nurses to refresh and improve their knowledge and performance.
2. Availability of procedure books containing all nursing activities regarding to care of neonates for nurses who care for high risk neonates in NICU.
3. Further studies should be conducted to improve nurses’ knowledge and performance regarding feeding of neonates.