Improving NICU Referrals to the Missouri Early Intervention Program (First Steps)

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**Background**
- First Steps is the statewide early intervention program in Missouri.
- There are specific eligibility criteria for patient’s to qualify.
- Some patients are eligible based on criteria identified in the NICU.
- Review of referrals from the Truman NICU revealed that only 24% of eligible patients were being referred.

**Criteria**
Patients born less than 1,500 grams with at least one of the following:
- APGAR ≤ 6 at 5 minutes.
- Intraventricular hemorrhage (Grade II, III, or IV).
- Any positive pressure ventilation greater than 48 hours.
- Resuscitation/code-event requiring chest compressions.

**Aim**
- To increase the number of appropriate referrals from the Truman NICU to the First Steps Program.
- Increase resident discussion and awareness of early intervention referrals during discharge.

**Intervention**
1. Include First Steps information as part of the monthly resident orientation.
2. Include referral to First Steps as part of the resident discharge checklist.
3. Display a sign of criteria in the physician/NP work area.

**Results**
Percent of Referrals Made for Eligible Patients 2016-Present

**Plan:** Increase referrals to ≥75% with the interventions listed.
**Act:** Changes to be adopted in the NICU while continuing to monitor results.
**Study:** Since implementation of interventions, there has been a 100% referral rate.
**Do:** Interventions have been implemented and data is being collected.