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# Increasing rates of breastmilk use at time of Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) discharge: An improvement project in a Midwest level IV NICU

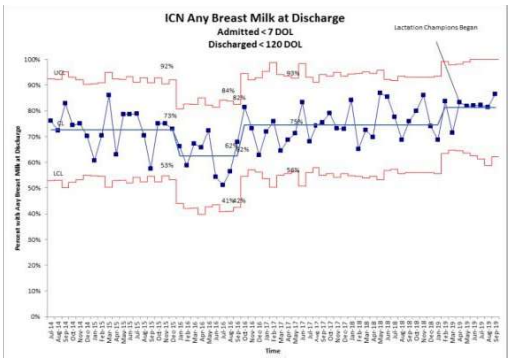
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### Background/Aim

- Breast milk is the preferred food for all infants.
- The rate of breast milk use at time of discharge was below the goal of the institution.
- A gap was identified in bedside nursing education, limiting their ability to provide resources and education to mothers. Nursing involvement ensures skilled, comprehensive, and accessible breastfeeding support.
- The aim of this project is to increase breast milk rates at time of NICU discharge to 95% of eligible patients by December of 2019.

Table 1:



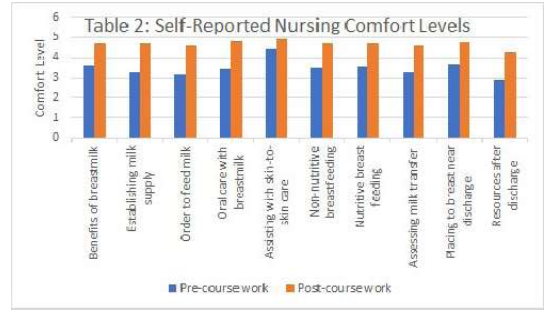
### Methods/Analysis

- Baseline numbers of breastmilk use at discharge obtained for the 12 months prior to interventions and tracked throughout.
- Core group of nurses identified to undergo initial educational training beginning in April 2019.
- A pre-assessment was given that evaluated level of comfort and knowledge on a range of NICU specific lactation needs.
- Provided monthly educational meetings, a nationally certified lactation course and hands-on practice applying knowledge supervised by an Internationally Board-Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC).
- Following coursework and education, a post-assessment was taken.



### Results/Conclusion

- In 2018, breastmilk at discharge was 76%. Since beginning of intervention, rates have consistently been >82%. (See table 1)
- Comfort levels increased in all 10 aspects of lactation support assessed. See table 2 below.



- Increasing education for nurses has coincided with an increase in infants receiving breastmilk at discharge.
- Additional evaluation is needed to identify the method of instruction that had the highest impact on increase in nursing confidence levels.
- Next steps include evaluating educational opportunities for providers.

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