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Testing a Peer Support Program for Parents of Infants Going Home from the NICU

REACH Dissemination Committee, Maine, USA

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Testing a Peer Support Program for Parents of Infants Going Home from the NICU

U.S. newborns requiring care in a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) have an **increased risk** of long-term disability, and short-term or ongoing specialty care.

Parents of these infants report **increased anxiety and stress** in the NICU and after discharge.

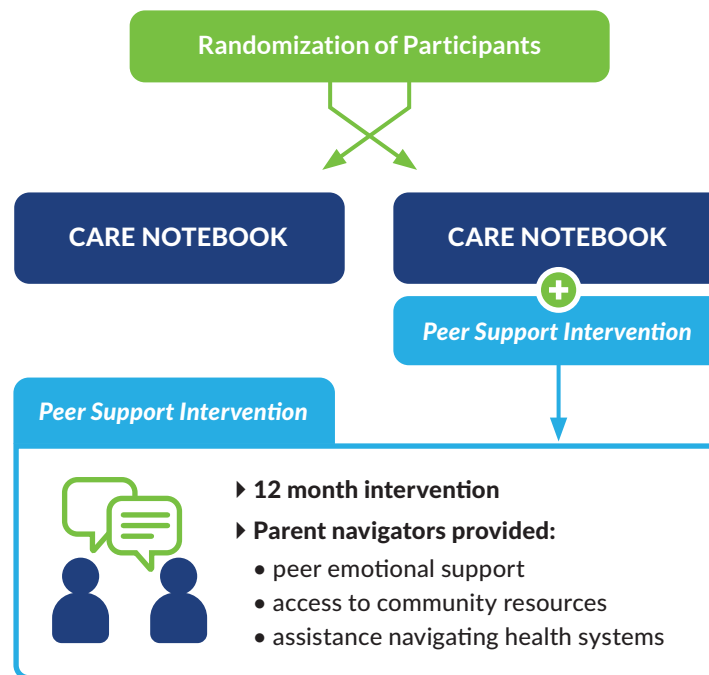
LOCATION & POPULATION

- ▶ Washington, D.C. hospital NICU
- ▶ 300 parents of infants discharged from the NICU
- ▶ 44% Black
- ▶ 39% White
- ▶ 8% Mixed Race
- ▶ 6% Asian
- ▶ 3% American Indian or Pacific Islander
- ▶ Average age: 30
- ▶ 89% Women



STUDY DESIGN

The study aimed to assess the impact of peer support through parent navigation on parental mental health and infant health care use after NICU discharge.



FINDINGS at 12 months

▶ Participants reported on measures of:

- stress
- self-efficacy
- depression
- infant healthcare utilization
- anxiety



▶ Parental Mental Health

- For both groups, **mental health outcomes improved**, with a slight decline/leveling off toward the end
- No difference in **mental health trajectories** between groups



▶ Infant Health Outcomes (between groups)

- No difference in the number of **hospitalizations or ED visits**
- No difference in **infant development**



95% of parents in the program felt their **needs were met** and **information given was helpful**

97% would **recommend parent navigation for others**

USED ACRONYMS: NICU - neonatal intensive care unit

Key Take-Away

Peer support after NICU discharge did not improve self-reported parental mental health or infant healthcare utilization.

REFERENCES

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2. Fratantoni K, Kritikos K, Jacangelo J, Herrera N, Jacobs M. (2020). *Testing a Peer Support Program for Parents of Infants Going Home from the NICU*. Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI). <https://doi.org/10.25302/06.2020.IHS.140311567>

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