Keeping Skin in The Game: Bringing Awareness to Neonatal Skin Injuries

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Background
- Skin injury is a significant problem in the neonatal population.
- The most common skin injuries found in the neonatal population are:
  - Skin tears
  - IV infiltrates
  - Device related injury
  - Diaper dermatitis
  - Irritant and contact dermatitis
  - Adhesive injuries
- Every neonate is considered high risk and many preventative measures are performed with daily care.
- As many as 4% of patients are discharged from the NICU with significant scarring.
- Rates of unintentional skin injury in lower gestational age infants can be as high as 57% as compared to 3% in their term gestational age counterparts.

Methods/Project Activities
- Representatives from Nursing, Medicine, and Administration joined in the implementation efforts
- Creation of ongoing data collection for QI from selected metrics of documentation
- Diaper dermatitis algorithm published in resident handbook for Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
- Staff education on skin care policy revisions
- Neonatal Skin Care Visiting Scholar Presentation
- Continued NICU presence at skin-related, hospital-wide committee meetings
- Skin and Wound CNS position implemented
- Monthly meetings to discuss data, skin care practices, and quality improvement strategies
- Weekly skin rounds

Leadership Journey
“The 5 practices of the KP Model of leadership (Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart) helped create numerous meaningful experiences that have led to the generation of a stronger awareness surrounding neonatal skin care” (Fellow)

28 physicians benefitted from this project
191 nurses benefitted from this project
102 female children ages 0-5 benefitted from this project
135 male children ages 0-5 benefitted from this project

Purpose
- Enhance awareness of neonatal skin injuries.
- To perform a QI project gathering skin injury data within a level 4 NICU.
- Characterize most common types of injuries.
- Assess and compare descriptions of injuries within documentation before and after activities.
- Discover need for further work and education.

Outcomes
- Documentation analysis revealed inconsistent descriptions.
- High ecchymosis rate speculated to be related to birth process and other procedures.
- Unexpected elevated rate of diaper dermatitis
- Demonstrated the need for ongoing education
- No pressure ulcers

Future Considerations
- Examine outcomes for preventable causes
- Examine relationships to sentinel events and incident reporting
- Poster presentations at national conference
- Develop NICU skin team to tackle:
  - Education and support of injuries
  - Policy development and product evaluation
  - Continuous QI activities

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