


vCreate: Bringing Parents Closer to Babies in Neonatal Care.

“Plymouth’s Story: A Collaborative Approach”

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- UHP Neonatal Service = NICU, Peninsula Neonatal Transport Service, Transitional Care Ward and Neonatal Outreach.
- Part of the South West ODN¹ and one of 3 regional tertiary NICU's across the region.
- Our remit to care for the smallest and sickest babies from across Devon and Cornwall working closely with other neonatal and maternity service providers.
- Current annual admissions to NICU approximately 450 babies year providing 1900 intensive care days.
- Length of stay for extreme preterm infants can ≥ 100 days



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Parental Challenges

- **Massive emotional rollercoaster** – an abundance of evidence that having a baby on NICU impacts maternal and paternal mental health beyond discharge.
- **Increased financial burdens²** – Bliss have identified that NICU families can be worse off by up to £280/week as a result of expensive hospital food, car parking and travel expenses, overnight accommodation etc.
- **Managing NICU v Home life** - families feeling torn between care of other children at home and their baby on NICU. Massive pressure on the non-birthing partner to return to work.



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Parental Challenges – What have UHP implemented so far?

- **Clinical psychologist** to provide confidential support for all our NICU families.
- **FiCare³**: a model that integrates families as partners in the NICU care team, and provides a structure that supports the implementation of family-centered care
- **FAB Workers**: Family and Baby Workers from our local Children's Centre's visit twice/week to offer practical and financial advice to all NICU and TCW parents.
- **Free car parking** for all our NICU parents(Average cost per stay/day for all other visitors £12.50)
- **Nutrition**: One free meal/parent/day
- **Hardship Fund** : non means tested of £50/week for all displaced families.
- **Free Accommodation**: guaranteed for all displaced parents. Massive geographical challenges for some of our locally booked and displaced families.
- **Breastfeeding and Peer Support Workers**: parent volunteers who have undergone additional training to provide breastfeeding advice or emotional/practical advice to current NICU families.
-**vCreate!!**⁴



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- First introduced in the NICU @ The Royal Hospital for Children, Glasgow 2017⁵
- A free secure video messaging service that allows clinical staff to keep families up to date with their babies progress when they are away from the unit.
- It is recognised that one the highest moments of stress for parents are when they are not with their baby.
- UHP NICU the 15th unit to introduce vCreate but the first unit to have corporate sponsorship,
- Parents can share the videos with family and friends. Great way of involving siblings
- It is not app based so can be accessed on all multiple hand held/computer devices.



.....vCreate: implementation

- Team identified – multi-professional
- 3 iPads were purchased, one each for the nurseries, local charitable funds were used
- A local significant business contacted who agreed to sponsor the project
- Staff training implemented and documentation written, including privacy notice, instructions for parents and staff.
- Despite vCreate being given full governance clearance from NHS Digital, here at UHP we had to comply with local protocols and obtain a new ICT Project approval.



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vCreate launched 15th August 2018, UHP



Since the launch over 100 video clips have been created for our NICU Families.

vCreate @UHP

Please insert video – thank you.



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Acknowledgements and Thanks

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Consultant Lead: Dr Giles Richardson

Nursing Leads: Senior Sister Jo Bennett, Sister Lisa Maxfield and Senior Sister Katie Oakes

vCreate: Ben Moore and Sarah Handley

And finally... our parents, charitable donors and colleagues at UHP.



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