

Homeward Bound: Highlights from the Day

- Breastfeeding is natural, but not easy
- Feeding issues should be addressed often, over time
- Parents need hands-on CPR training, not videos
- Primary nurses are awesome
- Inform parents – ESPECIALLY if moving baby
- Check-in with parents when baby has a bad day – are they okay?
- Mental & emotional needs – may not be recognized until after discharge – plan & screen ahead!
- Explain to families why social workers should be involved—some families may have concerns or fears about social services/DCF involvement
- Medically fragile babies are often also the babies most likely to have unstable family situations – pay special attention to providing respectful and comprehensive discharge plans for these families
- PCP network directories should be created to help families ID care after discharge
- Hospital neonatologists have found increasing difficulty connecting to community pediatricians. Connecting with community pediatricians who round in the hospital may be a bridge to building these connections.



But Wait, There's More!

- Families are NOT visitors! Improving policies (e.g. 24-hour access to babies) can improve quality of care – CENTER the family!
- Your perception of discharge as a bridge may contrast with a family's perception of discharge as a cliff
- Families may have HRSN that make discharge particularly hard for them
- “We all have a role in helping families establish a medical home” –Dr. Smith
- Warm handoffs between neo team and PCP can improve coordination of care
- Use volunteers to engage families at the bedside
- Ask families if they'd like to share their experiences (most likely, they will). Families with similar experiences may instill trust in new NICU families reticent to share with the clinical team.
- Consider engaging your pharmacist in the discharge planning team/QI team
- Discharge readiness is the desired outcome – discharge preparedness is the process
- Demonstration of skills or teach-back of knowledge is essential in discharge preparation