The neonatal “Train-to-Home”

Staff Training Package
Instructions

This slide presentation has been designed to be a stand alone, self-directed learning package to inform staff caring for premature babies about the neonatal Train-to-Home and how to use it on their unit.

The unit where you work has decided to use the Train to Home materials to help prepare parents to take their babies home.

This presentation is designed to be simple and informative and should take you approx. 10 minutes to complete.

Further information which backs up the presentation is provided by links, which can be accessed by clicking on them as you work through the presentation (or coming back to them afterwards!)
Why has my unit decided to use the Train to Home pathway?

• Parents often feel under prepared when the time comes to take their premature baby home.

• The Train to Home provides a pathway for discharge planning which supports the NHS discharge initiative and Family-centred care principles.

• It also provides a framework to help staff give parents a realistic guide to when their baby might be discharged from hospital by giving them a ‘discharge date range’.

• It helps all staff to give consistent information to parents throughout their baby’s stay in the unit in a way that they can understand.
What does the Train-to-Home consist of?

There are 3 inter-dependant items:

2. Explanatory notes for staff.
3. The pathway leaflet for parents.
1. The baby’s laminated train

The train has five carriages each named after the physiological functions that you would expect to monitor in a preterm baby: breathing; feeding; growth; temperature; sleeping

The white windows on the carriages are designed for red, yellow and green stickers (whiteboard markers in the same colours could also be used):

- **Red** indicates the baby is NOT ready for home and needs to stay in the unit
- **Yellow** indicates the baby is stable and PREPARING for transfer to a smaller local hospital SCBU or to home
- **Green** indicates that the baby is doing well and is READY for transfer to a smaller local hospital SCBU or to home

The train provides a quick reference guide as to how far away discharge might be for an individual baby. It also has a space at the bottom to write the planned date range for discharge home.
How to use your baby’s train

The picture of the train at the baby’s bedside shows how your baby is doing in five areas:

- BREATHING
- FEEDING
- GROWING
- TEMPERATURE
- SLEEPING

Each area is shown as a window on the train. As your baby’s condition changes, you can change the window colour. The nursing staff will use the train to help explain what is happening in each area.

- R - Red means the baby is NOT ready for home and needs to stay in the unit.
- Y - Yellow means the baby is stable and PREPARING for transfer to a smaller local hospital or to home.
- G - Green means that the baby is doing well and is READY for transfer to a smaller local SCBU or to home.

The nurses and doctors have developed a list of the changes that need to happen for each colour to change, which they will share with you. Each time you visit your baby, talk to the nurse to check on your baby’s progress, and you can then make sure that the train windows are the right colours.

Every baby is different – for some babies the train windows change often, but others progress more slowly. If your baby’s condition is improving the windows will change from red to yellow to green.

If your baby is less well the windows may change back to yellow or red. This may worry you, but it is important that the train shows your baby’s true condition.

The train is meant to be a general guide to your baby’s condition. The nurses and doctors will give you specific information about your baby’s condition and plan of care.

Please refer to the Parent Train-to-Home leaflet and feel free to ask the nurses and doctors questions at any time.
2. Explanatory notes for staff  
(one A4 sheet)

- This is used to help you work out which coloured sticker should go in each window on a baby’s train. The range of colours across each function gives an overall indication of how close the baby is to going home.

- In the PREP study, parents said they also liked to look at the staff leaflet as it helped them to understand their baby’s condition.
3. The pathway leaflet for parents (2 sides on A4 sheet) - a weekly question guide that ties in with the functions on the train carriages

There are two leaflets, one for parents of babies born at 27-30 weeks gestation, and one for those born between 31-33 weeks.

They comprise questions that parents might ask staff to help them understand their baby’s condition and the care that they need.

The questions were developed by parents, nursing and medical staff advising the PREP study. They felt these would be important to enable parents to form a realistic understanding of their baby’s care.
When do I use it?

• Your unit should have its own guidelines as to when the Train-to-Home should first be given to parents.
• Ideally it should be introduced within the first 7 – 10 days after admission to the unit.
• Research demonstrated that parents often wanted the information very soon after admission, however the optimal time to start the pathway might differ from unit to unit and depend upon a baby’s condition.
How do I use it?

The materials (*laminated train + information sheet and parents’ pathway leaflet*) should be introduced to parents by nursing staff at an appropriate time with adequate explanation of their purpose:

• the train gives a visual guide to the baby’s progress (explain use of stickers; give copy of the Parents Information Sheet)

• the parent pathway leaflet provides a weekly question guide that ties in with the functions on the baby’s train carriages

• the discharge date range aims to give a realistic estimate of when to expect the baby to be discharged - “we would expect three-quarters of babies born at this time to be discharged within the dates we put on your train”*

The laminated train should be put on or near the baby’s incubator / cot, where it is easily visible.

* See slides 12 & 13 for further information on how to work out the discharge dates
What is the ‘discharge date range’?
- the range of dates (‘between (date) and (date)’) when a baby is expected to be discharged

By working out the length of stay of babies in the neonatal units used in the Preparing for Home (PREP) study, it was shown that 75% of babies went home 3-4 weeks before the baby’s original expected date of delivery (EDD).

Using the 50\textsuperscript{th} (median) and 75\textsuperscript{th} centiles as guides for length of stay enables a date range to be given to parents which will provide a more realistic guide to when their baby might be discharged home.
# How do I work out the discharge dates?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gestation at birth (weeks)</th>
<th>Suggested initial range for estimated discharge window</th>
<th>Example DOB</th>
<th>Estimated dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weeks added to DOB</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 weeks</td>
<td>8 – 10 weeks</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; October</td>
<td>26&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Nov – 10&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Dec</td>
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<td>28 weeks</td>
<td>7 – 9 weeks</td>
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<td>29 weeks</td>
<td>6 – 8 weeks</td>
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<td>30 weeks</td>
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<td>31 weeks</td>
<td>4.5 – 5.5 weeks</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; October</td>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; – 9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; Nov</td>
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<td>32 weeks</td>
<td>3 – 4 weeks</td>
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<td>33 weeks</td>
<td>2 – 3 weeks</td>
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How to narrow the discharge dates written on the train?

• The discharge date range on the train should be reviewed **weekly** by medical and nursing staff.

• The date range should be **narrowed** as the baby gets closer to discharge.

• In the week or so before the baby is discharged, the range should be reduced down to **2-4 days**.

• The expected day of discharge will usually be given as it becomes obvious to the staff and parents when the baby will be ready to go home.

• This is done on an individual basis.
Where can I get the Train to Home materials?

• To be arranged with the SW Neonatal Network
References

PREP website link – to come.

Please email any thoughts and feedback that you have about the package by August 10th to: Jenny Ingram

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