

Advanced Practicum Experience: A bitter sweet symphony

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A. Introduction

The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit is not immune to death, and it is an inevitable experience for a small number of babies and their families in the NICU. As neonatal specialist, supporting parents through the grief surrounding this loss therefore becomes a part of our professional practice.

The purpose of this presentation is to discuss a NIDCAP trainee’s experience following the death of their Advanced practicum candidate during their advanced practicum. “Billy” a term male infant was admitted to a surgical Neonatal Intensive Care unit following antenatal diagnosis of left congenital diaphragmatic hernia passed away following complication of his congenital anomaly. The aim of this presentation is to recount the experience of the NIDCAP Advanced practicum journey for a NIDCAP trainee and to provide a forum for discussion for future NIDCAP trainees.

B. Objectives

The objective of this presentation is to provide a platform to recount the experience of this advanced practicum and to provide a forum for discussion for future NIDCAP trainees. Following this presentation further objectives would be to provide strategies to assist others who may have the same experience in their NIDCAP Advanced practicum journey.

C. Approach

This presentation is a personal reflection of the physical and emotional experience of a NIDCAP trainee during their NIDCAP Advanced Practicum following the death of their advanced practice candidate.

D. Conclusion

Death, grief and loss are an unfortunate part of the NICU journey for a small number of babies and their families. How we, as neonatal specialists and NIDCAP professionals, support these families can have lasting consequences and will form lasting memory for these families. Ensuring that NIDCAP trainees are supported in the instance that this may occur during their Advanced practicum therefore becomes an important element for the NIDCAP program.