RPA Newborn Care Education

Introduction

Excellence in clinical education to facilitate ongoing optimisation of the care we provide to our patients is a firmly held philosophy of the department. Commitment is given to a wide variety of perinatal educational activities including:

- Medical and nursing students
- Postgraduate multidisciplinary education program
- Midwifery early discharge care of the newborn
- Overseas trainees
- Statewide outreach
- National perinatal morbidity and mortality education program
- Overseas trainees
- International perinatal education projects in developing countries

All members of staff in the department are encouraged to take part in educational activities both as teachers and learners.

Medical Students

Students from the University of Sydney attend a rotation in Perinatal & Women’s Health (PWH) in their final year of their course. The 8 week term is organised into an orientation /lecture week and then 6 weeks of clinical exposure. Each student will spend one week in the department of newborn care. During this week, they join the Neonatal Intensive Care Ward Rounds, attend deliveries where they are taught advanced neonatal resuscitation and spend one night in NICU. Students have the opportunity to attend outpatient clinics including drug and alcohol and hip clinic, they assist in doing well baby checks and are taught how to accurately measure growth parameters.

The curriculum aims to provide students with knowledge of the normal situation and the common abnormal conditions.
Elective students

Our department welcomes students who wish to spend an elective term learning more about caring for sick or preterm infants. Local medical students need to enquire about placement through the central clinical school and International students should contact A/Prof Nicholas Evans.

Post-graduate Multidisciplinary Education Program

The department runs a multi-disciplinary program open to all health professionals involved in the care of newborn babies within the area health network. The program offers sessions covering relevant clinical topics in addition to broader professional development such as management and presentation skills. The program aims to meet the learning needs of both novice and experienced health professionals in this field. High-fidelity clinical scenario teaching has recently been introduced to complement and extend the program, facilitating team-based training in complex critical care of the newborn. Residents and registrars in the department are supported to attend the teaching sessions with their nursing colleagues by the senior medical staff, with arrangements in place to cover their clinical duties. International trainees attached to the department for specialist training also access the program. Modern educational methods are employed to maximise learning and the sessions are largely practical and interactive allowing participants hands on experience. The structured SCORPIO and problem based interactive sessions are complemented by the academic, research and liaison meetings held in the department.
Certificate in Clinician Performed Ultrasound (CCPU Neonatal) at RPA Newborn Care

The CCPU is a postgraduate certificate in point of care neonatal ultrasound that is run through the Australasian Society for Ultrasound in Medicine. This qualification is aimed at advanced trainees and encompassed training in cardiac, cerebral and basic abdominal scanning.


RPA Newborn Care is accredited to provide teaching for the introduction course work so trainees within this department don’t need to attend the ASUM courses. Point of care ultrasound is part of the everyday functioning of the NICU at RPAH with all the neonatologists having ultrasound skills. There is an expectation that Fellows will develop these skills during their training here and we can often give more advanced registrars introductory training in this area.
Nursing Education

RPA Newborn Care has two full time Clinical Nurse Educators (CNE) who promote a learning environment and workplace culture centred on evidence based nursing practice. Nursing staff participate in continuous education and accreditation to ensure the highest standard of care for babies.

Clinical education sessions run daily within the unit. Nurses are given the opportunity to participate in regular conferences, seminars and courses provided by Sydney Local Health District, Australian College of Nursing, University of Technology Sydney (UTS) and The Children’s Hospital at Westmead. Senior nurses attend the quarterly simulation course on advanced neonatal resuscitation which is convened through the Children’s Hospital Westmead. Nurses are encouraged to achieve post-graduate qualifications in Special Care Nursing, Neonatal Intensive Care Nursing and Child and Family Health.

RPA Newborn Care facilitate undergraduate and postgraduate nursing and midwifery clinical practice for University of Technology Sydney, University of Tasmania, and over-seas students.

Upon joining the Department of Newborn Care, new staff members are thoroughly orientated to their new environment and receive ongoing support. In order to ensure a comprehensive orientation program, they spend a day with the lactation team, theatre midwife, Newborn Family Support Team and a few days with the CNE’s. Every nurse has the added support of a CNE when they are caring for babies on nCPAP and mechanical ventilation for the first time.
The midwifery discharge support program (MDSP) and RPA Midwifery Group Practice (MGP) have teams of dedicated midwives who follow up mothers and babies’ post discharge from hospital. These midwives are highly skilled at caring for both the mother and baby. Their role includes performing a baby check, screening and testing for jaundice as well as monitoring breast feeding and weight gain. The neonatal department provide regular teaching sessions on newborn examination with particular emphasis on the more challenging aspects (cardiovascular and hip) of the examination in order to support this excellent service. During these teaching sessions the midwives’ have the opportunity to examine and auscultate the hearts of babies in the nursery with cardiac murmurs.
Outreach Education

Newborn Resuscitation

RPA Newborn Care is committed to Outreach Newborn Resuscitation Education throughout NSW. This initiative, funded by NSW Health, involves senior nurses, nurse practitioners and doctors sharing their skills at regional centres through small group teaching. In the last few years teams have travelled to Dubbo, Bourke, Wagga, Broken Hill and Tamworth and more than 200 health care professionals have been trained. The main focus of these practical teaching sessions is advanced neonatal resuscitation including the insertion of umbilical catheters as well as intercostal drains. Interactive presentations on severe neonatal jaundice, exchange transfusions and therapeutic hypothermia for hypoxic ischaemic encephalopathy are also delivered. The RPA staff are grateful for the enthusiasm and willingness to learn demonstrated by their colleagues at these regional centres.

Substance Use in Pregnancy

RPA Perinatal and Family Drug Health Team (PAFDH) has developed and implemented several workshops on management of mothers and their babies who are affected by drug or alcohol use in pregnancy. We have run these workshops for both health professionals and foster carers on an outreach basis to Dubbo and Wagga and locally within the Sydney LHD.

If you are interested in the facilitation of an outreach workshop please contact our departmental secretary on 95158248
IMPROVE

IMPROVE workshops are designed to address the educational needs of health professionals involved in maternity and newborn care in managing perinatal death based on the Perinatal Society of Australia and New Zealand’s Perinatal Mortality Guideline. The workshop utilises the SCORPIO educational model designed for skills training. This involves small groups of learners rotating around six interactive learning stations that are each facilitated by an experienced educator. Members of our department were involved in the development and roll out of this education program which is now run Nationally via the Australia and New Zealand Stillbirth Alliance.

INTERNATIONAL

SEA–URCHIN Project

SEA-URCHIN is a five-year NHMRC funded collaborative project (2011-15) between four countries in South East Asia (Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia) and Australia. The project aims to evaluate the impact of a skills-based education strategy on rates of infection and death in the neonatal units of eleven hospitals.

Royal Prince Alfred Department of Newborn Care, along with colleagues from the University of Sydney, Royal North Shore and Prince of Wales Hospitals had the pleasure of being invited to design, develop and deliver this intensive 12 day train-the-trainer program in 2013. Education on key evidence-based strategies for reducing rates of neonatal infection was delivered in small-group, adaptable interactive training sessions to visiting medical and nursing staff from each of the 11 SE Asian Hospitals. The project is now in the implementation phase within the local units with ongoing support from the Australian-based project team.
Hoc Mai

Hoc Mai is an Australia Vietnam Medical charitable Foundation under the auspices of the University of Sydney. One of the major goals of Học Mãi, which literally translated means “forever learning”, has always been to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and skills of young medical students and experienced health professionals between Australia and Vietnam, with a view to forming bonds and ongoing relationships.

The Học Mãi Foundation has a distinguished Patron, Her Excellency, Professor Marie Bashir, Governor of New South Wales. Professor Bashir, Chancellor of The University of Sydney and a psychiatrist, has a long-standing interest in and passion for medical education and health improvement in Vietnam.

Medical and nursing staff from our department have travelled to Vietnam as part of Học Mai to teach on aspects of maternal and child health. Education has covered essential newborn care including breastfeeding, kangaroo mother care and infant resuscitation as well as recognition and treatment of childhood illness – pneumonia, diarrhoea and newborn infection.

Newborn Care staff have also taught health professionals from Vietnam who have received Học Mãi scholarships to travel to Sydney for a 3 month period and develop high level skills in evidence based medicine.
Macedonia

In 1999 Professor Heather Jeffery carried out a comprehensive review of perinatal services in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The following year our department facilitated an intensive educational program designed to improve the services to mothers and babies in this country. Central to this was a "train the trainer" approach involving 18 Macedonian doctors and nurses. A purpose-built medical education centre was commissioned in the capital Skopje. The Macedonian doctors and nurses spent 6 months in Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and were the lead educators along with members of our department in an 8 week program centred in the new continuing education centre. This program involved the majority of the nurses and doctors responsible for care of mothers and babies in Macedonia. The abrupt fall in the perinatal mortality rate in the following year was testament to the success of this program.