



# Family support services

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## Statement of the standard

The family receives care in an environment where their socioeconomic, mental health, and spiritual needs are supported.



### For parents and family

- Parents and families are informed by healthcare professionals about family support services available.



### For neonatal unit

- Unit guidelines are available and regularly updated to cover:
  - Socio-economic support by social worker
  - Psychological support and referrals to mental health specialists
  - Arrangements for pastoral/spiritual support
  - Postpartum care for mothers with admitted infants
  - Family daily activities (e.g. sibling area, laundry)
  - Regular psycho-social grand rounds
  - Parent associations available for support
- Annual self-assessment regarding infant- and family-centred developmental care, with regular assessment of parent experiences and satisfaction is undertaken.



### For hospitals

- Hospital guidelines are established and regularly updated on the topics named in component 4.

## Benefits

### Short-term benefits

- Reduced length of hospital stay
- Improved neurodevelopmental outcomes at discharge
- Enhanced maternal attachment behaviour in the postpartum period
- Improved pleasure in interaction with the infant
- Improved parental learning to recognise and adequately respond to infants' behavioural and social signals
- Facilitated process of becoming a parent during NICU stay
- Enhanced parental confidence and reduced parental stress

### Long-term benefits

- Improved neurodevelopmental outcomes
- Improved emotional well-being of infants at home
- Improved cognitive development at ten years of life
- Better child physiologic stability at ten years of life
- Higher quality of parent-infant interaction
- Improved emotional well-being of parents at home
- Reduced maternal depression and/or anxiety



### For healthcare professionals

- Unit guidelines on family support services are adhered to by all healthcare professionals.
- Healthcare professionals are informed about family support services.



### For health service

- National guidelines are available and regularly updated on the provision of socioeconomic, psychological, pastoral, and parent associations' support.

