



Dear friends and supporters of EFCNI,

It seems that summer is finally here – half the year has passed! At this point, we can already look back on some wonderful work, like our project on parenteral nutrition. Our project to raise awareness about the importance of proper parenteral nutrition for preterm and sick babies in Germany has published its barrier analysis and, based on the results, developed a hands-on toolkit to help hospitals to implement the official guidelines.

At the same time, this halfway point in the year also marks the launch of several new initiatives: For instance, registration is now open for German, Austrian, and Swiss hospitals to participate in this year's "Strong start for little heroes" campaign. We also want to draw your attention to the European Standards of Care for Newborn Health. This summer, 20 individual standards are up for review and we invite everyone to participate in the review process. We look forward to the projects still ahead of us this year.

Many thanks for your interest and support!

Please stay healthy and safe,

Silke Mader and the EFCNI team

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PERTUSSIS AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Vaccines are an integral part of reproductive health

July rings in the second month of activities for our awareness campaign about vaccines against pertussis (the whooping cough) during pregnancy. Look out for our social media posts in the next few weeks which explain why it can make sense for

pregnant women to get the vaccine against pertussis during the last trimester of pregnancy and how the transfer of immunity from mother to baby works. EFCNI also interviewed Professor Mechthild Groß, an expert on midwifery research and education, about the role vaccines play in reproductive health and why pertussis poses such a health risk to preterm and newborn babies. Please note: since the awareness campaign is geared towards Germany, all content is in German.

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REGISTER NOW!

“Strong start for little heroes”

For the 6th time we are inviting Neonatal Intensive Care Units in Germany, Austria and Switzerland to participate in “Strong start for little heroes” (“Starker Start für kleine Helden”), a project initiated by EFCNI together with Nestlé, to support hospitals in celebrating 17 November 2021. Register now and receive a comprehensive World Prematurity Day package including gift bags for the parents on the ward and valuable information about preterm birth and much more. Further information as well as the project website are available in German.

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GESELLSCHAFT
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DIGITAL CONFERENCE

Society for Neonatology and Paediatric Intensive Care Medicine hosts digital congress with a Viennese flair

EFCNI co-organised the 47th Annual Meeting of the GNPI (Die Gesellschaft für Neonatologie und Pädiatrische Intensivmedizin e.V./ Society for Neonatology and Paediatric Intensive Care Medicine). With the ongoing pandemic situation, the meeting once more took place in digital form. Experts were invited digitally to Vienna, the actual conference venue, to be offered a first-class scientific programme over 4 days. EFCNI hosted 6 sessions and led a workshop. Registered participants can access all contents on-demand from the digital congress portal until 31 August.

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BARRIER ANALYSIS

Surveying the state of parenteral nutrition in Germany



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Neonatal parenteral nutrition aims at providing nutrition to preterm and sick infants who cannot yet suck and swallow at the same time and have an immature digestive track. Adequate nutritional intakes – especially during the first 1000 days of life – are essential for promoting growth and health, including long-term metabolic, cognitive, and neurodevelopmental outcomes. In 2018, based on new evidence in this field of research, the European guidelines on parenteral nutrition were updated. Last year, EFCNI collaborated with the Federal Association of German Hospital Pharmacists (ADKA) and the German Society for Neonatology and Paediatric Intensive Care (GNPI) on a barrier analysis which surveyed to what extent the guidelines on parenteral nutrition are implemented in German hospitals and how parents are involved in the process. The findings have now been published (in German).

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IMPLEMENTING SAFE PARENTERAL NUTRITION

A toolkit to provide high-quality parenteral nutrition according to recommendations

Initiated by EFCNI, the GNPI and ADKA, a multidisciplinary panel of German-speaking experts including neonatologists, pharmacists, hygiene experts, nurses and parent representatives elaborated solutions to overcome barriers of parenteral nutrition in Germany. Considering conditions of the German care system, these solutions were transferred into a hands-on toolkit to improve the implementation of the evidence-based European guidelines on parenteral nutrition in NICUs and hospital pharmacies.

The toolkit “Toolkit für die parenterale Ernährung von Früh- und kranken Neugeborenen – Von der Leitlinie in die multidisziplinäre Anwendung“ comprises general information on parenteral nutrition, on risks and benefits, but also on current challenges and barriers. It offers hands-on advice and helpful materials on how to adhere to the evidence-based recommendations.

The toolkit was launched at the digital GNPI congress and is now available for download. Please note the toolkit is targeted at a German-speaking audience and so far available in German only.

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Network

NEWBORN RESUSCITATION



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The role of support technology in neonatal resuscitation

Earlier this year, the European Resuscitation Council (ECR) released an updated version of their guidelines regarding newborn resuscitation and transition support. Among other things, the guidelines highlight the advantages if electrocardiography during resuscitation processes. Heart rate detection by ECG has been shown to be more accurate and faster than other methods, such as estimates based on the caregiver listening with a stethoscope or counting pulsations through the umbilical cord. New technology has now been developed to support neonatologists during critical resuscitation cases and enable them to find the heartbeat faster.

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Science



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HIV INFECTION AND PRETERM BIRTH

Antiretroviral therapies may increase preterm birth rates

HIV treatment with antiretroviral therapies (ARTs) has not only improved people's quality of life, but also plays a key role in HIV pregnancies by protecting the unborn child from contracting the virus. However, a study by Elenga et al. suggests that ARTs can have negative effects on pregnancy outcomes, with an increase in preterm birth rates. In a comparative study, they found out that women infected with HIV had a higher probability of delivering their baby preterm with a rate of 31.6% compared to 13.5% in uninfected women. Among other factors, some forms of ART posed a higher risk of preterm birth, in particular boosted protease inhibitor (PI) therapies were associated with a higher rate of preterm delivery. Since the study sample size was too small to reach generalisable results, the new insights are an important impulse for further research.

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SUPPORTING PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN CARE

Systematic review on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on parents and infants

The review "Supporting parents as essential care partners in neonatal units during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic" was published in the July issue of Acta Paediatrica and was developed by the International Steering Group on Family Integrated Care in collaboration with two of our partnering



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organisations, the UK parent organisation Bliss and the Canadian Premature Babies Foundation (CPBF). During the pandemic, many neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) restricted parental access to one parent (usually the mother) and often significantly restricted the amount of time parents could spend with their infant as well. The authors aimed at reviewing the evidence on safety of maintaining family integrated care practices and the effects of restricting parental participation in neonatal care during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. This publication is another achievement to anchor Family Integrated Care in neonatal care.

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E-LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

Last chance to register for the RECAP summer school

The RECAP preterm Cohort Platform is a sustainable, geographically diverse and multidisciplinary database of national and European cohorts of babies born very preterm or with very low birth weight. It contains cohorts constituted over a 30-year time span and is designed to optimize the use of population data for research and innovation in healthcare, social and education policy. Attend the RECAP preterm Summer School E-Learning programme (programme launch: 1 July 2021) and receive an overview of very preterm birth cohorts and collaborative research principles and techniques. We invite researchers in the fields of neonatology, epidemiology, and psychology to sign up. Registration is free.

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NEW PREMSTEM IMAGE VIDEO

The project's objectives in a nutshell

The PREMSTEM project is investigating stem cells as a repair mechanism to treat brain damage in preterm babies. As a partner in this project, EFCNI is happy to inform that an explanatory video is now available, presenting this innovative, promising project in a comprehensible way to a lay people audience. The video explains what brain injury in preterm infants – also known as encephalopathy of prematurity (EOP) – is and what the project's objectives are to improve health outcomes of affected babies. Click and see for yourself!

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GUIDELINE UPDATES

The National Association of Neonatal Nurses has revised its guidelines

The National Association of Neonatal Nurses (NANN) in the United States has reviewed and updated its substantial repertoire of guidelines. The update is based on evidence-based practice over approximately the past 15 years and covers clinical practice, professional development, and family and patient education amongst others. These guidelines provide neonatal nurses at all stages of their career with clinical, developmental, and evidence-based resources

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European Standards of Care for Newborn Health



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LAUNCH OF REVISION PROCESS

19 individual standards are up for review – and you can get involved!

In order to ensure that the European Standards of Care for Newborn Health (ESCNH) remain up to date with the state of the art, the project features an in-built revision cycle. Each standard has its own lifecycle after which a review becomes mandatory. This year, for the first time, a total of 20 individual standards enter the revision process. This process consists of both a public and an expert consultation phase which run in parallel from August to September of this year. We invite all healthcare professionals working in neonatal care to participate in the process to ensure that the European Standards of Care for Newborn Health represent the expert opinions of professionals in the field.

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EFCNI-Academy

SAVE THE DATE!

Workshop on "The first 1000 days – a formative phase in a child's life"

After a successful digital launch in 2020, this year we invite all midwives, nursing staff and physician assistants to a half-day



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face-to-face workshop on the topic of "The first 1000 days - a formative phase in a child's life" on October 13, 2021 in Munich. During the event, renowned experts will provide insight into the areas of prevention, screening, nutrition, and lifestyle for pregnant women, mothers, newborns, and children. Further information as well as the workshop itself are in German.

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NEW TRANSLATIONS

The thermoregulation factsheet is also available in Spanish and German

Regulating a baby's temperature is just as important as monitoring their breathing and heartbeat. Body temperatures either below or above the normal range can lead to serious health issues, particularly for preterm born babies. Hypothermia, i.e. a body temperature below 36.5°C, has been linked to increased risks of sepsis and apnea of prematurity as well as higher risks for morbidity and mortality. Temperature control should therefore be a central aspect of neonatal care. In order to support parents and healthcare professionals, we developed a factsheet on thermoregulation which has now been translated into Spanish and German as well.

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GLANCE - Global Alliance for Newborn Care



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A HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS' PERSPECTIVE

Global analysis of neonatal care during the COVID-19 pandemic

With COVID-19 disrupting neonatal health systems around the world, with low and middle-income countries (LMIC) most affected, a group of experts conducted a global cross-sectional study to thematically analyse the experiences of neonatal healthcare providers (HCP) through an online survey. The analysis revealed concerning findings: High levels of stress on HCPs, disruption of newborn care practices, lack of guidelines for preterm and low birthweight (LBW) babies, and discouragement or postponing of infant and family-centred care such as kangaroo mother care (KMC) or breastfeeding. Given the benefits of KMC and breastfeeding for vulnerable newborns, especially preterm and LBW neonates, an increase

in additional neonatal deaths from these disruptions has been estimated, resulting in devastating long-term consequences. The life-saving approach of keeping mothers and newborns together alongside other infant and family-centred-care solutions is crucial to ensure the provision of essential and respectful care during a global pandemic.

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WEBINAR SERIES CONTINUES

Stronger together: a webinar series by and for midwives and women

As part of the Stronger Together webinar series, organised by the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), EFCNI founder and chairwoman Silke Mader presented on the role of parents in transforming care of small and sick newborns. In her talk, she emphasised the synergies that arise when midwives and parents work together for the benefit of hospitalised newborns. The webinar series will continue until the end of the year and together with leading international partners in global development and health ICM wants to offer insights into the current challenges in newborn and maternal health.

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EU Transparency Register ID Number: 33597655264-22 - Chairwoman of the Executive Board: Silke Mader

EFCNI is a non-profit organisation established under German public law | Tax reference number 143/235/22619.

