

## **DISCHARGE CRITERIA – NICU GUIDELINES**

The following criteria have to be met for a neonate to be discharged from the NICU either to the ward for parent-crafting or home:

1. Weight at least >1.5 kgs (individual cases to be discussed with consultant)
2. Gestation at least >34 weeks (individual cases to be discussed with consultant)
3. Self-ventilating with normal vital parameters like oxygen saturations, heart rate and respiratory rate
4. Maintaining euthermia fully clothed in open bed/BEMPU hypothermia watch monitoring
5. Established competent feeding by breast and suck without cardio respiratory compromise, with steady weight gain for at least 24-48 hours
6. Has been immunized according to chronological age
7. Routine metabolic screen and hearing screen done
8. Mother confident of direct breast feeds and suck feeds
9. Parents taught regarding dosage and administration of medications, supplements, maintaining temperature, KMC, sponge bath, skin and cord care
10. Parents explained about identification of danger signs
11. Parents taught BLS and Cardiopulmonary resuscitation
12. Cranial ultrasound screen done, if relevant
13. ROP screening initiated and follow up appointment is given
14. Neurodevelopmental status assessed and follow-up schedule given
15. Paediatric follow up appointment scheduled
16. Serum bilirubin in phototherapy range but not in the exchange transfusion zone can be transferred to postnatal ward

Parents to be counselled regarding timing of discharge or transfer to the ward well in advance, that is, at least 3-4 days before transferring a baby who has stayed for a prolonged period of time in the NICU.

## ***Discharge Checklist***

- 1) Extended newborn screening test
- 2) Hearing screen by AABR
- 3) Vaccinations - oral polio drops, and BCG, hepatitis B vaccine if weight >1.8 kgs or 30 days of age, whichever comes first
- 4) CPR training to the parents
- 5) Cranial ultrasound scan for preterm neonates as per protocol
- 6) Eye check for retinopathy of prematurity as per protocol
- 7) Hemoglobin, alkaline phosphatase, serum calcium and phosphate (and any other test as required) for growing preterm neonates at discharge if not done within a week prior to discharge
- 8) Repeat TSH if indicated at 34 weeks corrected

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