THREE YEARS LATER: IMPROVING INPATIENT SAFE SLEEP PRACTICES
AT NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL THROUGH THE SLEEP
(STOPPING LITTLE LIVES ENDED BY EDUCATING PARENTS/PROVIDERS)
PROJECT

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Problem Statement: Nationwide Children’s Hospital (NCH) is a leading pediatric
tertiary care hospital and admits thousands of infants a year, either to its Level III
Neonatal Intensive Care Unit or to other medical/surgical units in the hospital. The
hospital’s Safe Sleep Committee was formed in 2012 with the goal of improving the
sleep environments for these hospitalized infants <1 year of age in accordance with 2011
AAP Recommendations on Safe Infant Sleeping Environments. Initial audits revealed
that many practices did not align with the AAP guidelines, with unit audit average safe
sleep scores of 3.8 (out of 7.0 possible points).

Project Description (methods, procedures, approach): The committee has spent the
past three years creating and improving on a multi-faceted quality improvement project
aimed at improving our safe sleep behavior scores. Specific areas for implementation
have included policy creation and amendments, healthcare provider online and real-time
education measures, parent/caregiver audiovisual and print media education modalities,
and environmental management strategies, such as obtaining sleep-sacks and fitted sheets
for patient cribs.

Results: We have shown an increase in hospital-wide unit average safe sleep scores to
5.0 (out of 7.0 possible points). Our pilot unit (General Pediatrics) has had an increase
from 3.7 points to 5.9 points.

Conclusions (including lessons learned and next steps): We have learned that to
achieve success at a unit level, it is best to involve unit leadership and staff in the project
to increase buy-in and knowledge. Simultaneously, we have also discovered that active
administration participation increases the probability of success of a project. We are
currently working to increase our supply of sleep sacks to meet our needs based on the
ever-increasing census, as well as to create crib cards to illustrate to family and staff how
a safe sleep environment should appear.