

The Impact of the Tennessee Initiative for Perinatal Quality Care

“Safe to Sleep” Project



www.tipqc.org

PROBLEM

It is estimated that approximately 3,500 infants die annually in the United States from sleep-related infant deaths, which are identified when a baby is found deceased in a sleeping environment and is found with his or her head pressed into the mattress or pillow, in the presence of a co-sleeper, found wedged against an object, or when an infant is found in other circumstances that may have contributed to the infant's suffocation or strangulation. Sleep-related infant deaths also include sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), ill-defined deaths, and accidental suffocation and strangulation. After an initial decrease in the 1990s, the overall death rate attributable to sleep-related infant deaths has not declined in more recent years.¹

In Tennessee for the years 2014-2018, SIDS was the 4th leading cause of infant death. The number of sleep-related deaths for the past five years is shown in the table below.²

These sleep-related deaths accounted for 23% of all infant fatalities in Tennessee between 2013 and 2017, and 21% of these sleep-related deaths were considered to be “probably preventable”. While the overall infant mortality rate decreased from 7.4 per 1,000 live births in 2017 to 6.9 per 1,000 live births in 2018, the rate of sleep-related deaths increased slightly from 1.7 per 1,000 live births in 2016 to 1.8 per 1,000 live births in 2018.

Year	Number of Sleep-Related Deaths
2013	117
2014	99
2015	142
2016	139
2017	144

ACTION

Starting in spring 2020, 14 hospitals from across the state joined the Tennessee Initiative for Perinatal Quality Care (TIPQC) to reduce the number of sleep-related deaths through modeling and teaching in the hospital. Participating hospitals were provided a toolkit, data collection tools, and a road map for implementation. Focus areas were developing and implementing safe sleep policies in compliance with AAP guidelines, education of providers, staff, and parents, and regularly performing safe sleep audits. Teams participated in monthly huddles, quarterly learning sessions, and annual state-wide meetings.

Project Statistics

23%

of all Tennessee infant fatalities from 2013-2017 were due to sleep-related causes

4th

SIDS was the 4th leading cause of infant death in Tennessee from 2014-2018



The Impact of the Tennessee Initiative for Perinatal Quality Care

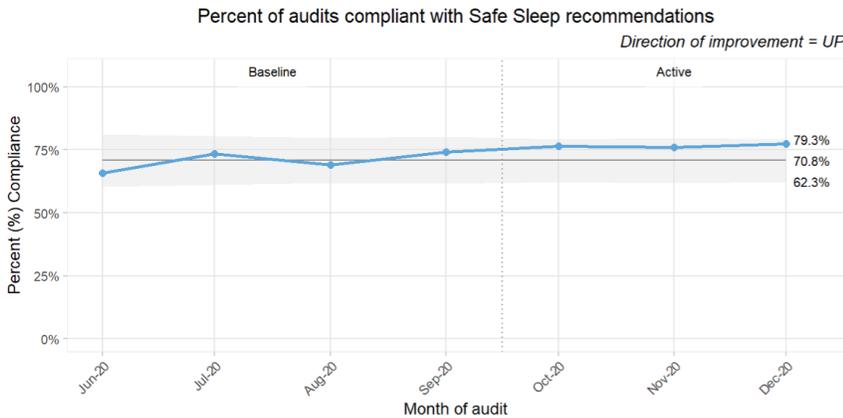
“Safe to Sleep” Project



www.tipqc.org

PRELIMINARY EXPLANATION OF IMPACT

From June to December 2020, over 1,500 safe sleep audits in Newborn Nurseries, NICUs, and parent rooms were conducted by the participating teams. Approximately 70% of the audits captured in June to September (the “Baseline” period of the project) were compliant with AAP guidelines – see Figure. The percent compliance has increased from Baseline to approximately 77% in the months of October to December. The main reasons for non-compliance are additional objects in crib, head of bed elevated, unsafe bedding, and positioning devices being used.



WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE

The collaborative and statewide efforts of TIPQC and the participating hospitals have all contributed to this improvement. The participating hospitals are continuing their efforts to implement all of the best practices in the safety bundle with the goal to further improve the process and outcome measures. Especially notable is the education of the providers on potentially better practices, and basic quality improvement processes.

CONTACT

For more information, please contact Brenda Barker, TIPQC Executive Director, at brenda.barker@vumc.org, or visit our website at www.tipqc.org.

¹ (SIDS and Other Sleep-Related Infant Deaths: Updated 2016 Recommendations for a Safe Infant Sleeping Environment, Task Force on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, 2016).

² Source: [https://data.tn.gov/t/Public/views/ChildFatalityDashboard/Infant-Sleep?](https://data.tn.gov/t/Public/views/ChildFatalityDashboard/Infant-Sleep?iframeSizedToWindow=true&%3Aembed=y&%3AshowAppBanner=false&%3Adisplay_count=no&%3AshowVizHome=no&%3Aorigin=viz_share_link&%3Atabs=no&%3Atoolbar=no)

https://data.tn.gov/t/Public/views/ChildFatalityDashboard/Infant-Sleep?iframeSizedToWindow=true&%3Aembed=y&%3AshowAppBanner=false&%3Adisplay_count=no&%3AshowVizHome=no&%3Aorigin=viz_share_link&%3Atabs=no&%3Atoolbar=no

Project Statistics

> 1,500

safe sleep audits conducted by 14 participating teams from June-December 2020

10%

increase in safe sleep audits compliant with AAP guidelines from June-December 2020

