### NICU Evidence Based Practice Project

**Question 1:** What is your overall perception of the level of noise on our unit?

**Question 2:** What is your perception of the level of noise on our unit between 7PM - 8PM and 7AM - 8AM?

**Question 3:** What is your perception of the level of noise on our unit?

**Question 4:** What is your perception of the level of noise on our unit during rounds?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Noise</th>
<th>Question #1 Before</th>
<th>Question #1 After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Staff Response %</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loud</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very loud</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very very loud</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

Comparison of before and after staff surveys showed that in general, considering the overall noise levels noted in the NICU, staff perceived a lower noise level in the loud category after the Yacker Tracker trial, as compared to before the trial started. The Yacker Tracker was set to operate during developmental rest time, at shift change, and during rounds. During the time periods the Yacker Tracker was turned on, staff perceived lower noise levels. While the Tracker was operational overall noise was perceived as quieter; there was a minority perception that very loud noises were increased during rounds. That slight increase may be due to a higher awareness of noise on the unit as a result of implementing the Yacker Tracker.

**Implication for Practice**

To increase the awareness and to decrease the level of noise fragile infants are exposed to in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. This study indicated that the use of the Yacker Tracker as a part of a noise reduction plan may help decrease noise levels in the NICU.

**Supporting Data**

- **Question 1 Before:** Staff Response %
- **Question 1 After:** Staff Response %
- **Question 2 Before:** Staff Response %
- **Question 2 After:** Staff Response %
- **Question 3 Before:** Staff Response %
- **Question 3 After:** Staff Response %
- **Question 4 Before:** Staff Response %
- **Question 4 After:** Staff Response %

**Summary**

The Quality Council surveyed staff members in July 2012 on their perception of noise level from very soft to very loud prior to instituting a visual auditory alarm (Yacker Tracker). Our Quality Council implemented the Yacker Tracker for a 2 week period. The intention of the Yacker Tracker was to increase the staff awareness of the level of noise on the unit and make a concerted effort to decrease the exposure of the infants to elevated noise. The times targeted were the change of shift, 7-8am and 7-8pm, multidisciplinary rounds, 10:30am-12:30pm, and during our developmental rest time from 1-2am and 1-2pm. The Yacker Tracker is a device that looks like a traffic light. When the noise level reaches a specified decibel level, it sets off a visual and/or auditory alarm. After the 2 week trial, the survey repeated to measure the staff’s perception of the level of noise on the unit.

Factors that may have affected results include acclimation to the Yacker Tracker, inconsistency of Yacker Tracker function due to battery depletion, and differences in unit dynamics based on patient acuity, volume, and visitors.

**Presenters**

NICU Quality Council members

**Literature Review**