

Improving Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Assessments

Authors : Nancy Wilson

Abstract : In utero, fetal drug exposure is prevalent amongst birthing facilities. Assessment tools for neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) are often cumbersome and ill-fitting, harboring immense subjectivity. This paradox often leads the clinical assessor to be hypervigilant when assessing the newborn for subtle symptoms of NAS, often mistaken for normal newborn behaviors. As a quality improvement initiative, this project led to a more adaptable NAS tool termed eat, sleep, console (ESC). This function-based NAS assessment scores the infant based on the ability to accomplish three basic newborn necessities- to sleep, to eat, and to be consoled. Literature supports that ESC methodology improves patient and family outcomes while providing more cost-effective care.

Keywords : neonatal abstinence syndrome, neonatal opioid withdrawal, maternal substance abuse, pregnancy, and addiction, Finnegan neonatal abstinence syndrome tool, eat, sleep, console

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