

## ARE PARENTS OF BABIES IN NICU OFFERED ADEQUATE SUPPORT FOR SMOKING CESSATION OR RELAPSE PREVENTION DURING THE ADMISSION?

Amy Nichols, NeSci Study Research Nurse, NNUH, Professor Paul Clarke, Consultant Neonatologist, NNUH, Dr Caitlin Notley, Senior Lecturer, Norwich Medical School, UEA

### Background

26% of UK women smoked in the 12 months before pregnancy (1).

While approximately 50% of women may quit smoking spontaneously during pregnancy (2), others continue to smoke, and many resume smoking after giving birth. In 2017, 10.8% of UK mothers were smokers at time of delivery (3).

Babies born to smokers weigh on average 200g less than those born to non-smokers (4), and are at 40% higher risk of being born preterm (3). Exposure to second hand smoke puts vulnerable infants at increased risk of hospital readmission and health problems.

It is unclear whether smoking cessation and relapse prevention support is currently offered to parents during the stressful Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) stay. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance recommends smoking cessation referral and support for all people, including patients, carers and visitors, in secondary care settings, and postpartum (PH48 & PH26 (4))

This study aimed to explore patient and staff perspectives on potential intervention, and to understand practice within other UK NICUs.

### Methods

#### Exploratory (PPI) interviews

- Data collection July - October 2017
- All parents of babies admitted to our large tertiary-level NICU invited to participate in an informal interview
- Convenience sampling
- Ethical approval (HRA ref: 17/NI/0110).
- Interviews undertaken by a trained senior neonatal research nurse

#### National survey

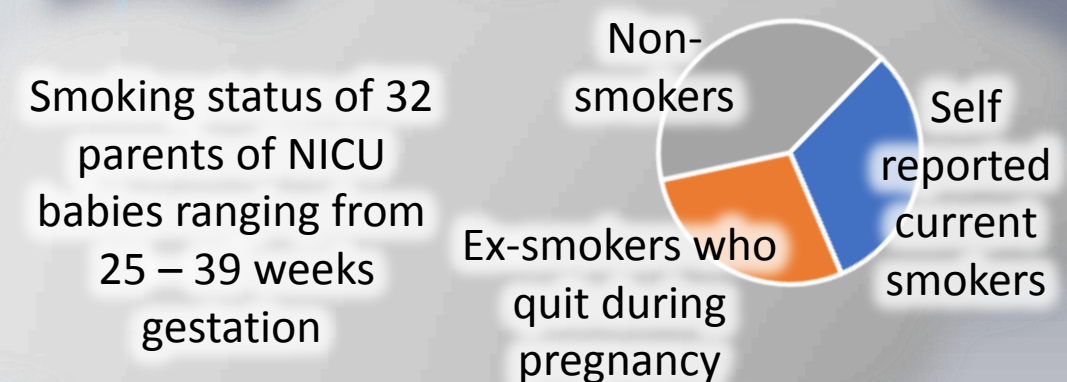
- Telephone survey of UK NICUs to ask about their current policy and practice regarding smoking cessation interventions.

### Conclusions

1. There is little dedicated smoking cessation or relapse prevention support offered to parents of UK NICU babies.
2. Of 32 parents approached during a 4-month period, approximately a third were smokers and a third were ex-smokers.
3. Given the concurrent expressed desire for support from both parents and professionals, and guidance that support should be available, our team will develop an evidence based intervention (Grant ref: NIHR RfPB PB-PG-0817-20032)

### Results - Interviews

32 Parents of NICU babies were asked their views on smoking cessation and support offered during pregnancy, at time of delivery and whilst staying on the unit.



**15/32** Participants stated that they would welcome support.

**78%** 25/32 reported being asked about smoking status during pregnancy (This should be routine practice for all women in the UK).

**9%** Only 3/32 reported being asked directly about their smoking status at the time of delivery.

**0%** No parent approached reported having been asking about smoking by any member of the NICU staff during their baby's admission.

### Results - Survey

- 15 UK NICUs were surveyed
- 0 reported having its own dedicated no-smoking policy.
- 3 reported routinely asking parents about smoking status
- 3 offered smoking-cessation support
- 7 offered advice at discharge.

