

Oh My Stress! Enduring Challenges for Preterm Infants and Parents During NICU Hospitalization and Parental Stress Post NICU Discharge

Vidhi Gadhiya, BS; Christi Brauer, BA; Thao Griffith, PhD, RN
 Loyola University of Chicago Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing

Background

10% of infants are born prematurely⁵
 NICU hospitalization causes significant stress to parents and infants¹
 Stress persists for months post-discharge²⁴



1 in 4 infants are admitted to the NICU¹⁸



Purpose

Understand stressors of preterm infants and parents during NICU hospitalization
 Understand stressors in parents post NICU discharge

Method

PubMed, CINAHL, and PsycInfo
 Keywords: NICU, stress, challenges, mother, father, infant, parental, discharge, premature, and preterm infant

Results

Figure 1. Infant Stressors during NICU Hospitalization

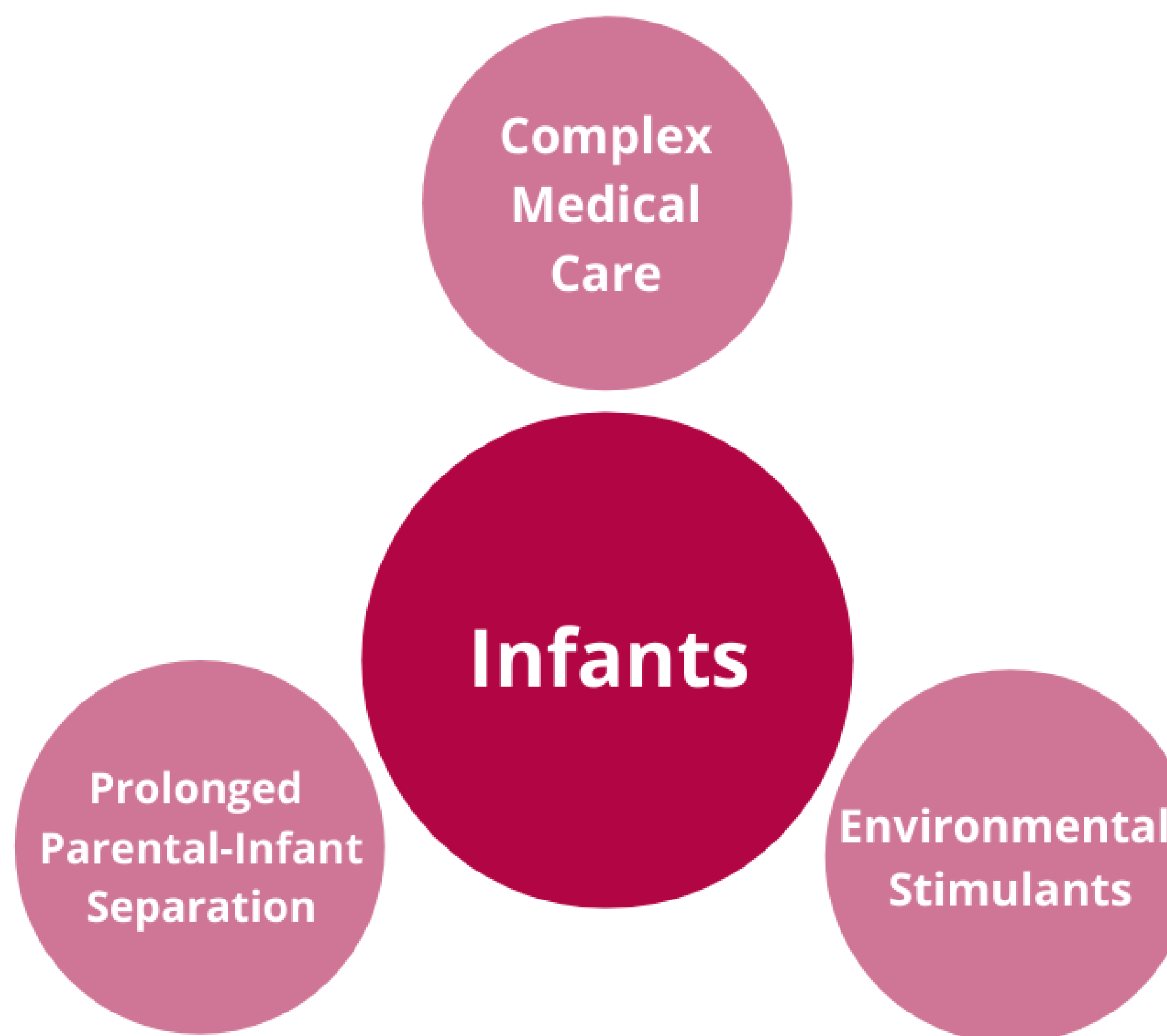
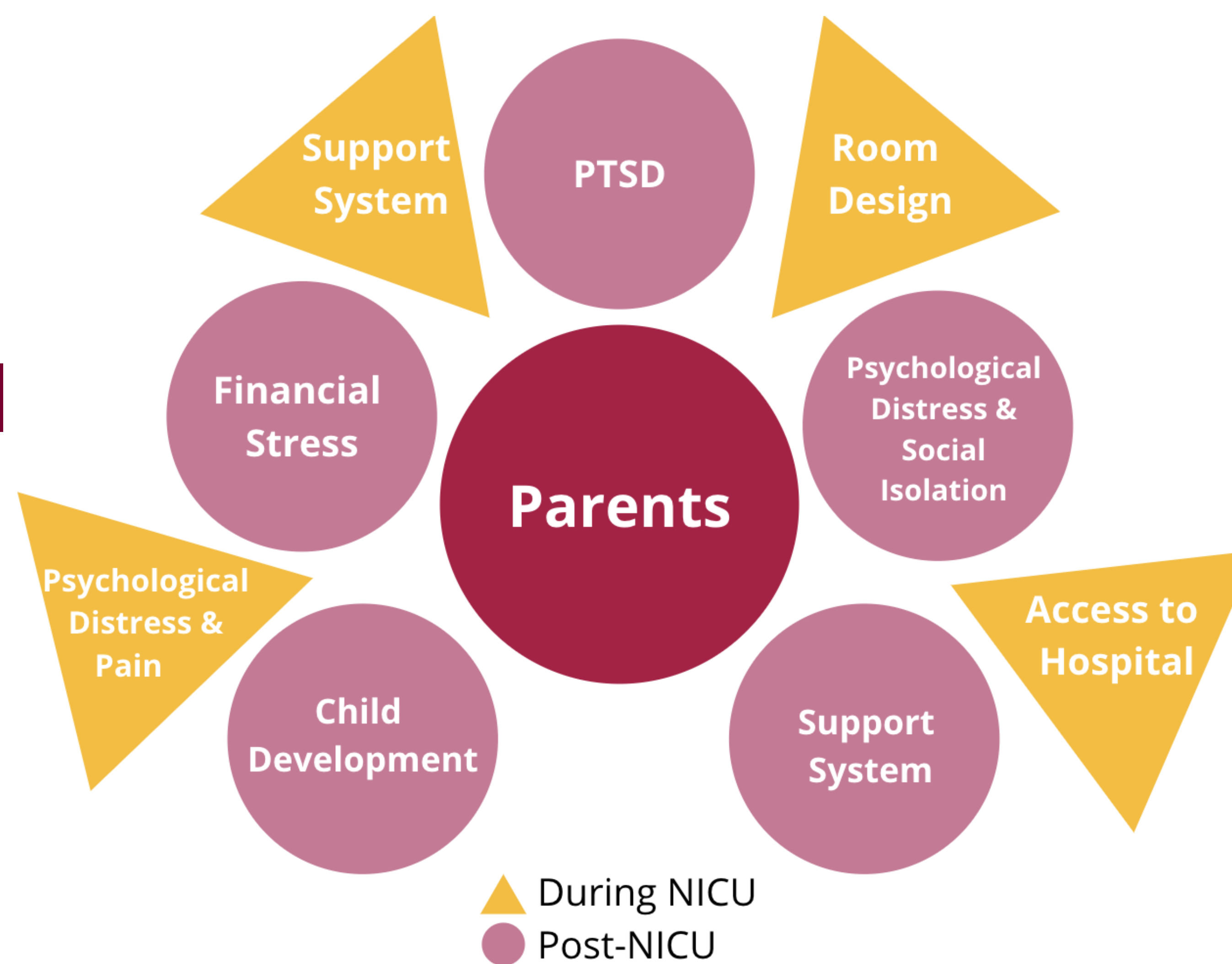


Figure 2. Parent Stressors during and post-NICU Hospitalization



Implications for Research and Practice

Identify stressors in NICU and post-discharge
 Improve stress assessment
 Develop risk assessment
 Develop targeted education for parents
 Develop interventions to reduce impact of stress

Table 1. Interventions for Preterm Infants

Intervention	Outcomes
Kangaroo Care	Improved infant-parent bonding
Family Integrated Care	Higher usage of breastmilk Consistent environment Higher growth Higher neurodevelopment

Table 2. Interventions for Parents

Intervention	Outcomes
Single-family Room	More privacy and space Reduce stress
Mental Health Counselors to Mothers and Fathers	Reduce stress Lower maternal PTSD

