

Socio-family support for parents of technology-dependent extremely preterm infants after hospital discharge

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Abstract

Parents of extremely preterm infants (<28 weeks of gestation) report high levels of stress and anxiety related to daily needs after hospital discharge. Social support has a significant role in reducing the negative psychological impact of preterm birth and parents' adaptation to caregiving. We conducted a hermeneutic phenomenological study using Gadamer's approach to explore and describe the experiences of parents of technology-dependent extremely preterm infants of socio-family support after hospital discharge. The study was conducted in four several Spanish organizations for families with preterm infants. It includes 17 semi-structured interviews (12 mothers and 5 fathers). Three main themes emerged from the analysis: post-discharge formal support for extremely preterm infants and families, home neonatal care: family support, and a thread of hope: parent-to-parent support. The parents' main support resources to deal with everyday difficulties are healthcare professionals, their partners, grandmothers, and peer parents of extremely preterm infants. The findings may be used to guide healthcare professionals in the creation of a support program according to preferences and needs of parents.

Author keywords

Discharge

Family

parenting support

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