

CHRD 2024: Abstract Submission Form

Presenter Name

Urvi Chaudhari

Presenter Status

Undergraduate Students

Role in the project

Write Abstract

Write papers on collected qualitative data and will be collecting data and analyzing data for the next part of our mixed-method study

Research Category

Community Health / Policy

Title

Mental Health of Parents of Children Born Preterm Beyond NICU: A Qualitative Study with Canadian Populations

Background

Parents of preterm children are at high risk for mental disorders, which can affect their ability to care for their children. However, there is a lack of comprehensive understanding of their mental health experience beyond the neonatal intensive care (NICU).

Objective

This qualitative study evaluates such parental experiences after their transition home from the NICU.

Methods

We conducted 26 semi-structured, one-on-one parental interviews of preterm children <32 weeks gestational age in Canada, who were between 1 and 18 years of age. Interviews were conducted virtually by parents with lived experience using an interview guide developed with their input. Data was analyzed using Constructivist Grounded Theory to identify recurring themes related to parental mental health.

Results

Several key themes related to parental experiences were identified. Some of the negative themes included persistent worry/fear concerning children's breathing, getting sick, and their ongoing health and development. Parents had ongoing anxiety and post-traumatic stress-like symptoms caused by various triggers. Some parents felt exhausted and isolated from their friends and family. Despite these experiences, most parents expressed feelings of gratitude, strength and confidence, empathy, closer relationships, personal growth, positive outlook on life, and resiliency.

Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the mental health experiences of parents of preterm child beyond NICU. It highlights the areas that need targeted mental health support for these parents.

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Authors

Name	Email	Role	Profession
Urvi Chaudhari	chaudh30@myumanitoba.ca	Presenting Author (First Author)	Medical Student
Amy Clark		Co Author (First Author)	Medical Student
Lynda Moore		Co Author	Parent Advisory Committee
Gunjan Seth		Co Author	Parent Advisory Committee
Chelsea Ruth		Co Author	Medical Doctor
Kristene Cheung		Co Author	Assistant Professor
James Bolton		Co Author	Medical Doctor + Professor
Rebecca Pearce		Co Author	Parent Advisory Committee
Marsha Campbell-Yeo		Co Author	Nurse Practitioner
Sapna Oberoi		Co Author	Medical Doctor + Assistant Professor
Andrea Wiebe		Co Author	Parent Advisory Committee
Prakesh S Shah		Co Author	Medical Doctor + Professor
Kojo Menseh		Co Author	Parent Advisory Committee
Tiffany Richards		Co Author	Parent Advisory Committee
Lisa M. Lix		Co Author	Full Professor
Torrie Richard		Co Author	Parent Advisory Committee
Allan Garland		Co Author	Medical Doctor
Diane Matheson		Co Author	Parent Advisory Committee
Andrew Hatala		Co Author	Medical Doctor +

Deepak Louis

Corresponding Author

Associate Professor

Medical Doctor +
Assistant Professor