Neonatal Unit Admission Criteria

Midlands and East Newborn Networks
- Staffordshire, Shropshire & Black Country Newborn Network
- Southern West Midlands Newborn Network
- Central Newborn Network
- Trent Perinatal Network
- East of England Perinatal Networks

There is noted to be variation in the neonatal unit admission criteria between the neonatal units in the Midlands and East Newborn Networks which cannot be explained by the presence or not of Transitional Care Facilities. The commissioners have asked the newborn networks to agree and implement common neonatal unit admission criteria in the region.

There should be good clinical reasons for admission to the neonatal unit. Unnecessary separation of mother and baby should be avoided as it affects parent-infant attachment. Admission to the neonatal unit should not be routine for babies >34<sup>+</sup>0 and >1800 g unless clinically indicated. The need to admit a baby to the neonatal unit should be discussed with a member of the senior medical team.

Admission to neonatal unit should be routine for the following babies:
- Less than 34<sup>+</sup>0 weeks
- Less than 1800 g
- Respiratory distress
- Poor condition at birth requiring prolonged resuscitation for more than 10 minutes and/or Cord pH < 7.0
- Congenital abnormalities likely to threaten immediate survival
- Seizures
- Apnoeic or cyanotic episodes
- Sepsis (Does not include babies receiving prophylactic antibiotics)
- Jaundice, requiring intensive phototherapy (High levels of irradiance in the 430- to 490-nm band delivered to as much of the infant’s surface area as possible) or exchange transfusion
- Inability to tolerate enteral feeds with vomiting and/or abdominal distension
- Hypoglycaemia not responding to enteral treatment
- Small for gestational age (Birth weight <2<sup>nd</sup> centile) and hypoglycaemic or unable to tolerate enteral feeds
- Any other babies where there are clinical concerns requiring neonatal specialist care and the need for admission has been assessed and agreed with a member of the senior medical team

The neonatal unit should not routinely admit babies for purely social reasons (e.g. Mother in ITU, Adoption) or undergoing care proceedings.

Reporting & learning lessons from admissions to the Neonatal Unit which are outside of the admission criteria
Because all admissions to the neonatal unit separates mothers/carers from their baby all admissions to the Neonatal Units which are outside of the above admission criteria should be notified via an incident reporting form. All cases should be reviewed through the usual governance arrangements at each unit and any further investigations required agreed. Admissions to the neonatal units outside of admission criteria should also be reviewed at the multidisciplinary perinatal morbidity meeting. Any learning from these cases should be discussed at unit staff meetings, the perinatal morbidity meeting and shared with the network.