

The Introduction of a Psychology Service into a Neonatal Unit

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Y&H Neonatal ODN Annual Conference
Thursday 25th April 2019



In hospital and in the community

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*“You hadn’t considered the weight of her tubes the fact she needs them so badly
And without them would be screwed
Your heart goes into panic your head it will explode
You hadn’t factored in the fear that was carried in this load*

*Your heart starts racing, you feel huge guilt
Why aren’t you relaxed and happy
From all the love you should have built*

*But all you think is fear of hoping she is ok
That somehow you holding her you were getting in the way
From the machines that she needs and the drs who know
You are sat holding your bundle and scared
To let her go”*

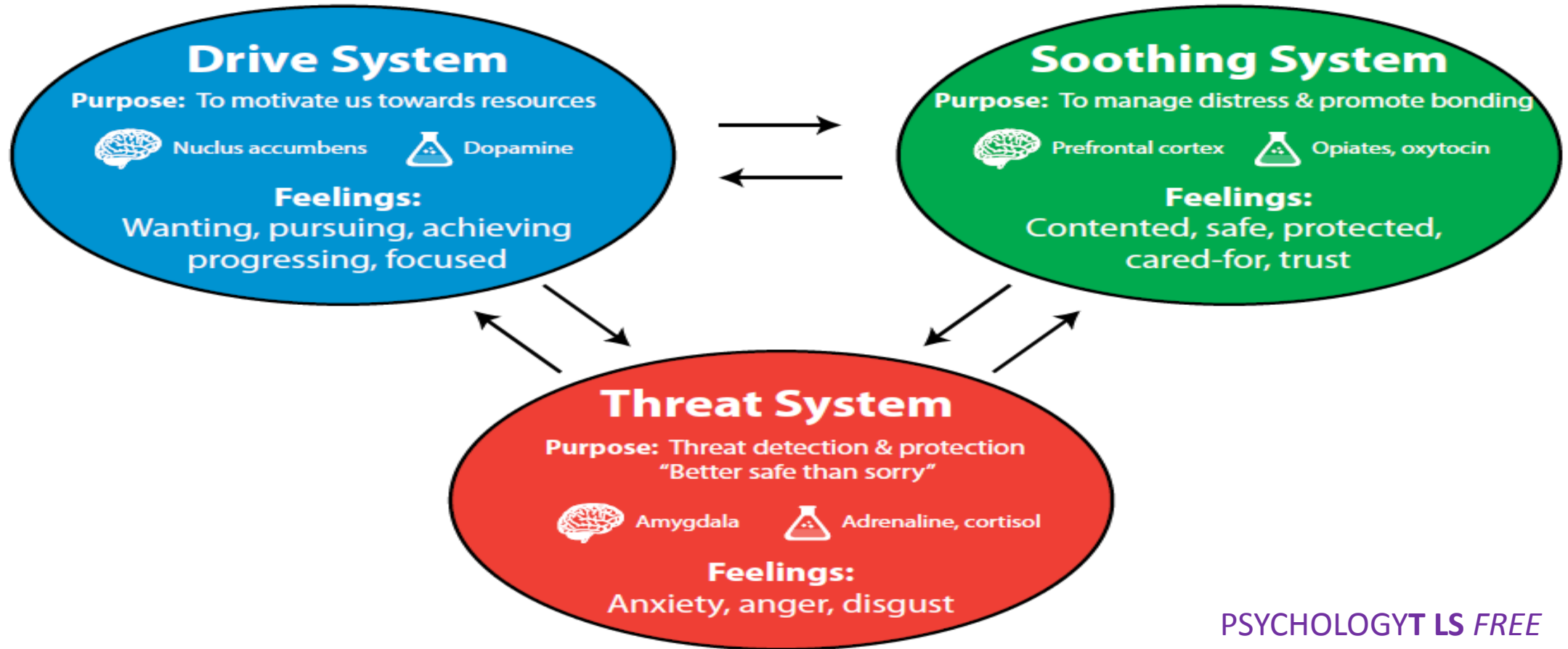
Mum of baby on the Neonatal unit:
Permission given to share

Background

- The psychological needs of families and staff on neonatal units have become more recognised ^{1,2, 3, 4.}
- Following a scoping exercise Charitable funds were secured:
 - Two Clinical Psychologists
 - Provide 0.7 wte
 - Covering Mon-Wed
 - 1 day a week additional honorary contract



Compassionate Care



PSYCHOLOGY T LS FREE 5



In hospital and in the community

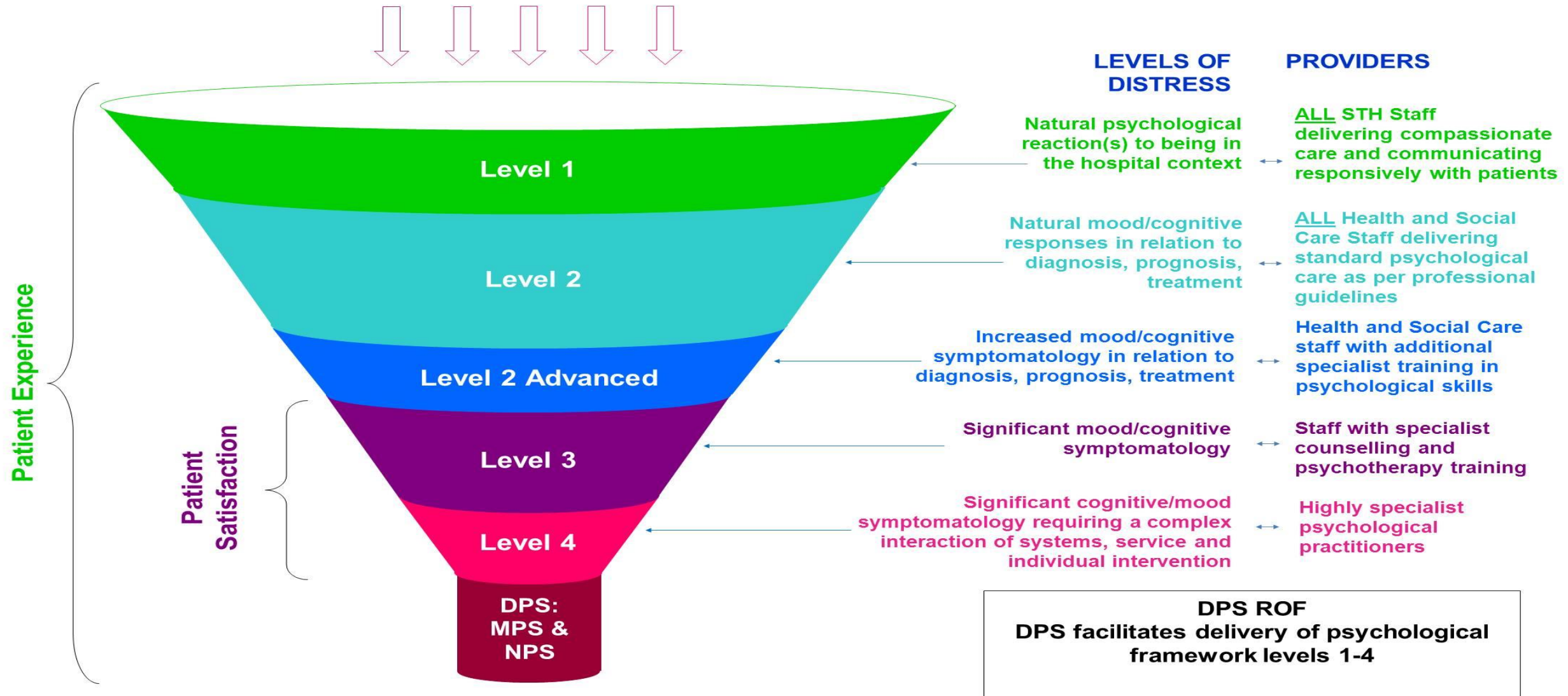
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Jessop Wing Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

PSYCHOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF ACUTE PHYSICAL CARE



Stepped Care Approach

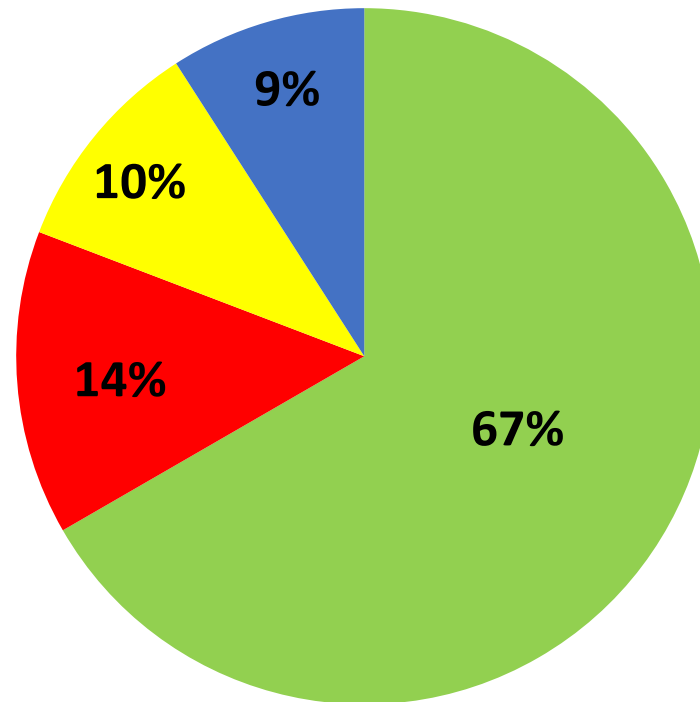
Services offered

- Staff training (self-care, understanding family's needs)
- Multi-professional 'Neonatal Family Support team' to coordinate support offered to families
- Introduction of psychology service to all families
- Staff reflective practice
- Staff consultation
- Liaison with MDT and attendance at meetings to understand families' needs
- Family support group ("Family Huddle")
- Direct psychological support for families and staff via formal referral or 'drop in'



Referrals

47 referrals over a one year period (Jan-Dec 2018).



Referral reason

- Emotional impact with a need for support
- Birth trauma
- Bereavement
- Attachment/bonding difficulties





Outcomes

- **GAD-7 (Anxiety) and PHQ-9 (Depression)**
- **Session Rating Scales**



Peer Support

- “Family Huddle”
- Weekly
- Facilitated by Clinical Psychologist
- Refreshments provided



**Family Huddle
Invitation**

Dear _____

Angela and Jess invite you to attend Family Huddle.


What is Family Huddle?
We believe that looking after yourself is important whilst your baby is on the Neonatal unit. It is also usually helpful to meet others who have shared similar experiences. During Family Huddle we take a break and refuel whilst also having time to reflect and meet with other families.

Angela and Jess from the Neonatal Psychology Service will provide some information and lead a short discussion on a topic relevant to families of babies on the neonatal unit. You are free to join in or sit back and relax. You can then stay and have more refreshments, talk to us further, or just get to know other families.

Where: Parents' coffee lounge (behind the SCBU desk), Neonatal Unit

When: Every Tuesday - 1-2pm
You are welcome to drop in to any that you can.

Refreshments will be provided



Teaching/ Training

- “Looking after ourselves” All Neonatal staff
- “Giving care, taking care” Band 6 Nursing staff



Summary

Reflections

- The service we do provide is well received.
- Balancing accessibility and flexibility with capacity.
- Getting to know a large and complex system.
- Aims supported amongst leadership and wider MDT.

The future

- Service review is on-going.
- Particular focus on gathering service user views.
- Aim is to seek substantive funding through specialised Neonatal Service commissioning.



References

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4. Larson, C.P., Dryden-Palmer, K.D., Gibbons, C. et al. (2017) Moral distress in PICU and neonatal ICU practitioners: A cross-sectional evaluation. *Pediatric Critical Care Medicine*, 18:e318–e326
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