

PROTOCOL FOR: Cuddlers: Use of

- POLICY:
1. The nurse is responsible for supporting, understanding, and following the guidelines of the Cuddler Program to assure safety and maintain the high standards and positive effects of the program.
 2. Parents may refuse to have their infants cuddled. Infants who meet criteria will be cuddled unless parents have refused this service.
 3. Babies to be cuddled must be >24 hours old, >24 hours in JDH NICU, and must be clinically stable. Stable may mean stable temperature, without sepsis, minimal FiO₂ requirements or minimal/mild apnea.
 4. Cuddlers are not to be given confidential information about babies or their families.
 5. Cuddlers may take babies out of open cribs without a nurse present if the baby has no IV and is in room air or on a nasal cannula. Otherwise, a nurse must assist the cuddler.
 6. Cuddlers may swaddle a baby and take the infant out of an isolette if the baby has no IVs and is in room air or on a nasal cannula, but a nurse must be present to oversee the action and verify proper safety standards.
 7. Cuddlers must notify a nurse when they return an infant to an isolette or crib, and a nurse must check the infant to be sure that all equipment is functional and the infant is safe.
 8. Cuddlers are responsible for notifying a nurse of any alarms.
 9. Cuddlers may feed and diaper infants if they are responsible doing these tasks, but the nurse is ultimately responsible.
 10. Cuddlers may cuddle babies on ventilators if a nurse is present in the room at all times. Cuddlers may not return a ventilated baby to the isolette or warmer. This is the nurse's responsibility.
 11. Cuddlers may not cuddle babies with umbilical lines
 12. Nursery staff facilitators/coordinators collaborate with the Volunteer Department to maintain the program and to orient new cuddlers to the program.

SUPPORTIVE DATA: The Cuddler Program is a volunteer program coordinated by the Volunteer Department and designated Nursery Staff Facilitators/Coordinators. Each cuddler is scheduled to be

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in the unit during designated time periods. Nursing feedback to cuddler Coordinators is expected and valued.

CLINICAL
ASSESSMENT

- AND CARE:
1. The nurse assigned to a baby is responsible for assessing the infant's stability and makes the decision if that infant may be cuddled by a volunteer cuddler.
 2. The nurse should check to be sure that the cuddler has done a 3-minute scrub before entering the nursery. Cuddlers should be reminded to wash their hands and change gowns (if wearing one) between babies.
 3. A nurse must secure all IVs, wires, etc., under blankets for cuddlers.
 4. Cuddlers are not responsible for setting up oxygen. A nurse is responsible for setting up the oxygen for the infant being cuddled.
 5. Cuddlers are in no way responsible for assessing the status of a baby or assessing the infant if a monitor should alarm.
 6. Cuddlers are in no way responsible for reacting to alarms. The nurse is directly responsible for rectifying any problems, including resetting alarms.

APPROVAL: Nursing Standards Committee
Coordinator of Neonatal Cuddler Program
Department of Volunteer Services

EFFECTIVE DATE: 1/83

REVISION DATES: 6/85, 1/86, 1/89, 4/92, 5/96, 6/99, 2/03

REVIEWED DATES: 12/08