

<b>Title</b>	Early Childhood Intervention in Neonatal and Maternal Health
<b>Organisation</b>	Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital (CMJAH), Gauteng Department of Health
<b>Innovation</b>	<p>This project is unique as the first task team created within the paediatric therapeutic support services team focused on improving the Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) service within the hospital.</p> <p>Firstly, by transforming existing services through the modification of the Neonatal follow up (NNFU) screening clinic and Hypoxic-Ischemic Encephalopathy (HIE) screening clinic. The ECI team evaluated the service delivery program and identified a gap in the method of assessment and tracking of high-risk patients. Therefore, the innovation implemented by the ECI task team involved the research and implementation of the gold-standard assessment tool (Ages and Stages Questionnaire) through a transdisciplinary service approach. This enhanced the quality and efficiency of service delivery, maximising the use of human resources, as more high-risk children could be screened in a shorter period with an assessment tool which yields valid and reliable results.</p> <p>Secondly, through a needs analysis, the task team identified a gap in the inclusion of maternal care as part of the high-risk family system requiring therapeutic support and intervention. A new solution of maternal and infant health groups has been initiated by the team to provide information support pertaining to physical and mental health support strategies. The aim is to positively impact the maternal bonding and family systems of the neonate to increase the protective factors within their microsystem for improved health outcomes.</p> <p>Furthermore, the ECI task team expanded the focus of awareness within the CMJAH paediatric sector, by innovatively targeting awareness days such as Prem Awareness Day in collaboration with medical and therapeutic support service team. Awareness days have expanded the focus from patients towards the upskilling and sharing of resources amongst the healthcare professionals involved in ECI management with the aim of enhancing service delivery to the neonatal and maternal health populations.</p>
<b>Impact</b>	<p>The implementation of transdisciplinary approach has allowed for more patients to be screened at the NNFU and HIE high-risk follow up clinics. Due to the high patient load and the varying time allocations of multiple medical staff a large population of high-risk patients were previously unable to receive screening, monitoring and parent training by all members of the therapeutic services team. However, the positive impact of the program innovation has allowed for team members to screen for developmental components of other disciplines through successful team process of training, modelling, role release and on-going role support. This approach has decreased the waiting time of patients requiring screening and has increased the impact of service delivery to a larger population as therapists now have the capacity to screen first time attending patients who were not previously screened due to time constraints.</p> <p>The maternal and infant health education groups and screening program has positively impacted the postnatal wards. The program directly impacts</p>

a previous gap within the therapeutic service delivery due to limited human and time resources. The program provides education to mothers on postnatal exercises and care as well as feeding, developmental milestone information and tips on maternal and infant mental health. This part of the project aims to address the family at large and giving information to mothers and parents to assist in flagging issues in their own health and their baby's health and development as early as possible. The compilation of a comprehensive maternal and infant health booklet offers a long-term impact within families. The information service is likewise facilitated in a transdisciplinary manner and therefore allows for this therapeutic need to be met while maximising the human resources of the public health sector.

The innovations in the awareness day campaigns have achieved a greater awareness and sense of teaming within the neonatal service delivery teams of the hospital. The ECI task team impacted a wider population of medical staff through targeted skills sharing amongst professionals to provide the holistic care within the Neonatal unit.