

## Quality New-born Care - A Way Forward

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Quality care at birth is one of the most important factors in reducing the neonatal morbidity and mortality. It is shown that 10% of the world's population have disability due to various causes. 15-20% of them are affected by Cerebral Palsy. In India, the incidence is around 3/1000 live births. Prematurity and Birth Asphyxia are one of the major risk factors of cerebral palsy. Despite improved neonatal care and advanced technology, increasing incidence of CP has been observed, which is of great concern.

Although the institutional deliveries in many states of our country are on the rise, the primary healthcare centres, where most of the deliveries happen in rural India are not well prepared for neonatal emergencies. Hence, babies get referred to higher centres for further management. With no proper new-born transport system existing, babies are transported either by public or private vehicle. Delay in transport due to various causes like arrangement of the vehicle, financial aspects further add to the misery. Babies thus transported without any medical assistance are at high risk of mortality and long-term morbidity. Hence there is an urgent need for a robust neonatal transport system to prevent these incidents.

Stabilization of new-born prior to and during transport is a very critical aspect and has shown to improve the outcome of such critically ill neonate. However, despite the best care during transport, new-borns are susceptible to neurological insult to the developing brain resulting in children with disability. Though there is no cure for such babies, early intervention with multidisciplinary approach helps in reducing their distress. These services are designed to identify and satisfy the children's needs in five develop-

mental areas. These are physical, cognitive, communication, social or emotional development, sensory and adaptive development.

Surrounded by lot of myths and misconceptions, acceptance of these children in society is quite a challenge. The enigma of the cerebral palsy has to be demystified in the public and thereby reduce the widespread myths existing in the society. Eradicating the ignorance by creating public awareness will ensure a better society where every individual is respected and given an opportunity to live a dignified life.

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