

GUIDELINES FOR USE OF THE NEONATAL OBSERVATION SHEET

PURPOSE: Is as a observation sheet for recording behavioural and medical symptoms of neonatal withdrawal and will be used on all infants of substance using mother's.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The nurse will:

- document observations on the symptomatic newborn at three or four hourly intervals which includes:
 - the first 96 hours of life
 - after the onset of signs and symptoms of withdrawal
 - with vomiting and diarrhea
 - when morphine is started, altered or discontinued
- document observation on the asymptomatic newborn each shift, after 96 hours of age.

DOCUMENTATION:

1. On each sheet, the baby's gestational age and birth weight are recorded in the corresponding space at the top of the sheet.
2. The observation sheet lists the signs and symptoms of drug withdrawal most commonly seen in the infant. The grey shading in the far left column highlights the main categories of observations.
3. The second column from the left, next to the categories of observations, lists the possible signs and symptoms of withdrawal for each category.
4. The third column is for observations.
5. In the space under **Interval of Observation** shaded in grey, record the date, the baby's age (in days since birth), and the period of time the recordings in the corresponding column take place. The recording of signs and symptoms should include all observations within that time frame, i.e. if you are recording at 1100, include all your observations of the baby from 0700 at the beginning of your shift.
6. The bottom row, shaded in grey, is for the **Observer's Initials**.
7. The bottom section is for comments. This could include activities that correlate with changes in symptoms, environmental changes, such as alterations in light and noise and starting, altering or discontinuing morphine.