

# PRENATAL EDUCATION AND SUPPORT GROUPS FOR PARENTS WHOSE BABY WILL COME TO THE NICU: WHY AND HOW TO GET STARTED?

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## BACKGROUND

- Parents are often mourning a “normal” delivery and/or baby and may experience guilt, anxiety and sadness
- Peer-to-peer support groups in NICU demonstrated positive impact
- Stressors start before birth
- Isolation of women in high-risk pregnancy units

## OBJECTIVE

- To describe the **creation and development** of a **prenatal education and support group** for parents whose baby will be admitted in the NICU

## METHODS

- 2 STEPS  
Mixed methods (with open-ended questions)
- 1/ Needs assessment**
- In 2018
  - Parents who participated in NICU-workshops
  - Topics wished to discuss prenatally
- 2/ Feasibility pilot study**
- In 2020 (COVID period)
  - Project only started online
  - A WEEKLY 1-HOUR WORKSHOP
  - Perspectives of prospective mothers who were hospitalized on the high-risk pregnancy unit
  - On educational support groups
  - In person, then online (COVID), then hybrid

## RESULTS

### NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- \* 27/45 NICU parents participated
- \* Several prenatal SUPPORT THEMES identified:
  - \* **parental role,**
  - \* normalizing their **experience/emotions,**
  - \* **adapting** to their new reality, control, guilt and trust.
- \* EDUCATIONAL THEMES described:
  - \* information about the NICU,
  - \* what the baby would look like,
  - \* technology around the baby and
  - \* common neonatal interventions,
  - \* parents' role in the team.

Guide et Vidéo de bienvenue en Néonatalogie  
Accessibles en ligne



<https://vimeo.com/449839052/d88643480b>

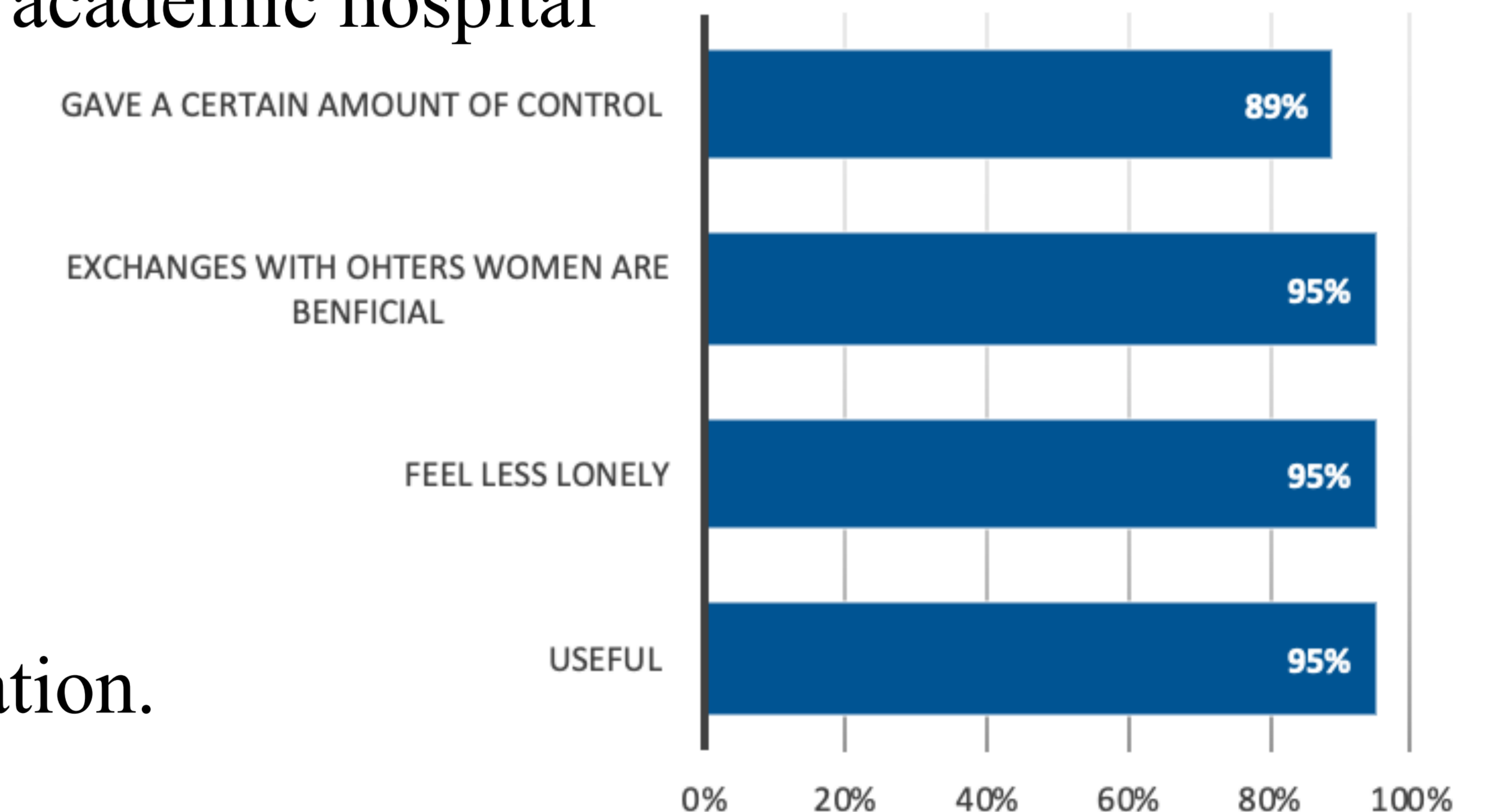
OMBRELLES - NÉONATOLOGIE



- \* POWER POINT PRESENTATION AND CHECKLIST DEVELOPED

### PILOT STUDY

- ❖ 19 mothers hospitalized on a high-risk pregnancy unit in a large academic hospital
  - average 32 years old,
  - average pregnancy 29.3 weeks
- ❖ Survey:
  - 95% agreed or strongly agreed that the workshop was useful,
  - 95% that the workshop made them feel less lonely
  - 95% that exchanges with other women were beneficial
  - 89% that gave them a certain amount of control on their situation.



- ❖ Example of quotes

*“I want to congratulate your team, this workshop is an excellent idea to make feel pregnant women feel better and not alone!”.*

## CONCLUSION

- ➔ Prenatal educational workshops provide a unique and useful means to support future NICU-parents.
- ➔ Future investigations will explore whether these meetings will improve clinical outcomes.