

Teleneonatology: Right Care, Right Place, Right Time

Around 140 virtual sessions per month. Savings of £33k per month.

"Telemedicine has now become part of our normal care for babies"



Clinicians working for the Liverpool Neonatal Partnership at Alder Hey Children's and Liverpool Women's Hospitals have been using innovative telemedicine robots to ensure that babies are provided with the best possible care without the clinician being in the room.

Paediatric and neonatal surgeons from Alder Hey and neonatologists from Liverpool Women's will often work side by side on wards or in operating theatres in treating sick neonatal babies but COVID-19 restricted movement of staff between the two hospitals. In addition, 50% of staff needed to isolate/shield.

The innovative equipment was up and running in just five weeks. This meant that remote clinicians were able to take part in ward rounds, deliver ad hoc emergency medical advice and facilitate urgent reviews for babies that have just been operated on without having to travel to the relevant hospital site.

The telemedicine robots come with two incredible high-definition cameras which allow clinicians to obtain a clear view of a baby. The cameras can zoom into every detail, with the main cameras being able to zoom up to 24x and the boom camera having the ability to zoom up to 36x meaning that clinicians can also view vital details in order to make key clinical decisions. The device supports the attachment of peripherals such as stethoscopes or ultrasounds to enhance the diagnostic experience of the remote doctors.



Image from www.alderheycharity.org



Dr Chris Dewhurst. Clinical Director for the Liverpool Neonatal Partnership said:

*“At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic there was a reduction of about a third in the face-to-face clinical time that the consultant neonatologists were able to provide. This reduction threatened our ability to provide a clinical service to the neonatal units at Liverpool Women’s Hospital and Alder Hey Hospital. The telemedicine system has allowed our consultants who have been shielding to provide a full clinical service across both organisations. We have actually seen the care for our babies be enhanced by the telemedicine system. Busy specialists have been able to be at the baby’s cot side within minutes of being contacted, providing their expert opinion, and discussing with the families as if they were in the room. Parents have fed back how they have been able to build a relationship with consultants who visited them regularly, despite not meeting them in person. **Telemedicine has now become part of our normal care for babies across the city.**”*

- Around 140 virtual sessions per month
- Savings of £33k per month
- Excellent feedback & parent satisfaction
- Clinician telemedicine training is delivered virtually
- Improvement to Internal teamwork

The Liverpool Neonatal Partnership are now looking to focus on expanding the project to provide telemedicine assistance to peripheral hospitals rather than just newborn intensive care unit (NICU) coverage.

The project has proven that Teleneonatology is effective under normal circumstances and in times of crisis and disruption.

For more information and for a reference direct from the Liverpool Neonatal Partnership, please email henry.maas@consultantconnect.org.uk.