American Academy of Nursing Designates Leader of NICU Infant Breastfeeding Program as “Edge Runner”

Dr. Diane Spatz Makes it Possible for Women to Breastfeed NICU Infants

Washington, DC (PRWEB) May 11, 2015 -- The American Academy of Nursing today announced the designation of Diane L. Spatz, PhD, RN-BC, FAAN, who is a Professor of Perinatal Nursing and the Helen M. Shearer Professor of Nutrition at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, and a Nurse Researcher and Director of the Lactation Program at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia as an Academy Edge Runner for her nurse-designed model of care to promote breastfeeding in vulnerable infants of the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). Edge Runners are part of the Academy’s Raise the Voice campaign, which promotes new evidence-based health care models that better serve patients, lower costs, and have measurable results.

“The Academy is proud to recognize Dr. Diane Spatz for her work in creating a replicable and efficient solution for NICUs to use to make it possible for more mothers to breastfeed,” said Academy President, Diana J. Mason, PhD, RN, FAAN. “Patient care models like these developed by Edge Runners are transforming America’s health systems for the better, using nurses as their key instruments for delivery.”

The goal of Dr. Spatz’s program, 10 Steps to Promote & Protect Human Milk and Breastfeeding in Vulnerable Infants, is to close the gap in care at NICUs where vulnerable infants who are most in need of human milk are the least likely to receive it. Her model of care educates health professionals on the best practices for the use of human milk and breastfeeding in NICU infants, focusing on the critical roles nurses play in lactation support. Dr. Spatz’s model of care has been implemented to great success in hospitals throughout the United States and abroad.

“I created this model because there was no emphasis on helping mothers to breastfeed their infants in the NICU. Healthcare providers were not educated on lactation support and hospitals lacked the resources. The implementation of my 10 step model results in significant improvement in delivering human milk to the infants who most need it in the NICU,” said Dr. Spatz.

Dr. Spatz’s model was first introduced at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) in 2008, where she is a nurse researcher specializing in lactation. In 2000, the percentage of NICU infants at CHOP receiving human milk at discharge was approximately 30 percent. As of 2014, and since implementation of Dr. Spatz’s model, over 86 percent of infants at CHOP were discharged from the NICU on human milk. In 2015, there are now over 600 staff nurses trained to provide evidence based lactation support and care at CHOP.

Through its Raise the Voice campaign, the Academy is mobilizing its fellows, health leaders and partner organizations to recognize nurses who are leading the way with new ideas to transform the health system and to ensure that they are heard.

About the American Academy of Nursing

The American Academy of Nursing (http://www.AANnet.org) serves the public and the nursing profession by advancing health policy and practice through the generation, synthesis, and dissemination of nursing knowledge. The Academy's more than 2,300 fellows are nursing's most accomplished leaders in education,
management, practice, policy, and research. They have been recognized for their extraordinary contributions to nursing and health care.
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