



DOI: 10.14434/do.v16i1.35778

Edmonton NIDCAP Training Centre, Canada

Andrea Nykipilo and Juzer Tyebkhan, Co-Directors, ENTCC

Our neonatal program in Edmonton, AB, Canada began its journey in 1996 when Dr. Juzer Tyebkhan first learned about NIDCAP. His interest and desire to bring this knowledge to our Edmonton neonatal units led to NIDCAP training and education for a small group of physicians and staff starting with Jean Cole as trainer in 1998. Obtaining a grant for a randomized control trial of NIDCAP in Edmonton followed and the original Edmonton NIDCAP team completed the study in 2004. It was subsequently published in 2009.¹ This series of events was the start of bringing NIDCAP to Edmonton and making it a standard of care in our five neonatal units across the city, which continues to the present day:

Stollery Children’s Hospital sites:

- Philip C. Etches NICU at the Royal Alexandra Hospital (Level 2/Level 3)
- David Schiff NICU at University of Alberta Hospital Site (surgical/cardiac)
- Sturgeon Community Hospital (Level 2)

Covenant Health sites:

- Grey Nuns (Level 2)
- Misericordia (Level 2)

While the group membership has changed over the years, Juzer became the first Canadian Trainer-in-Training (or “TINT” as it was so fondly named) with Dr. Joy Browne as NIDCAP Trainer and APIB Trainer, and Dr. Deborah Buehler as APIB



NIDCAP Team

Trainer. Over the next several years, a total of twelve Edmonton professionals would complete their NIDCAP training under their expertise and mentorship. Once Juzer achieved NIDCAP Trainer, he carried on with all training for NIDCAP in Edmonton. Today Edmonton has seven active NIDCAP Professionals, including Juzer, who is also an APIB Professional.

In 2017, we were honored to host over 100 NFI members for the Annual NIDCAP Trainers Meeting and about 100 additional Edmonton-based professionals for our open scientific forum of NIDCAP. During the meeting, we officially opened the Edmonton NIDCAP Training Centre Canada, or ENTCC. We are so thankful that we had the opportunity for Dr. Heideise Als to cut the ribbon and that we were able to celebrate the momentous occasion twenty-one years in the making with so many of the NFI family present with us in our city. Of course, we must mention that none of this would have been possible without the hard work and dedication of many people over the years.



Heidelise Als officially opening the Edmonton NIDCAP Training Centre



The NIDCAP Trainers Meeting in 2017

So, you might be wondering, what have we been up to since then?

As for most people across the world, the past three years have challenged the Edmonton NIDCAP Team, but as we say in the world of development – the pathway continues because adaptive strategies arise to overcome hurdles. ENTCC has navigated the challenges and looks ahead to the next steps of developmental progress. ENTCC's goals remain:

- Education and NIDCAP training
- Care and advocacy for babies, families, and our neonatal professionals
- Furthering the scholarship of developmental care

Education and NIDCAP Training

We believe that the cornerstone to ensuring that NIDCAP remains a standard of care in all units in Edmonton is a foundational training for staff. In 2018, we began to instruct the FINE (Family and Infant Neurodevelopmental Education) program as the entry to NIDCAP education. Many interdisciplinary participants from across Canada have now attended the FINE Level 1 workshops at ENTCC. This allowed us to bring education and understanding of NIDCAP training to hundreds of people throughout 2018 and 2019. As well, a small number of Edmonton staff are currently taking FINE Level 2. A workshop was held in Mumbai, India in November 2021 attended by 13 professionals from five cities. We are working with our colleagues in the NICUs in India to further this international training collaboration. Slowly, as gathering restrictions have eased, we have started offering the training in Edmonton once again in 2022. As NIDCAP trainer for ENTCC, Juzer continues to do NIDCAP Training for new trainees. We hope to see our foundational education lead to future NIDCAP training opportunities across Canada and elsewhere.

In addition, we are looking to the future with an innovative mindset by collaborating with Academic Technologies at the University of Alberta to create a platform of online resources for NIDCAP. We continue to create and collect material for future video-based learning of infant neurobehaviour. One main lesson that we learned during the pandemic pivot was that NICU professionals want education that is accessible virtually. We believe that this should not take the place of in-person, relationship-based educational components, and hands-on practice, but online, multi-modal education can augment and enhance our teaching and help us meet the needs of contemporary learners who come to ENTCC for training. We are excited to see what the future holds in this area!

Advocacy, Working with Patients and Families

Despite challenges in the healthcare system in Alberta in recent years and the stress experienced by families and staff related to the pandemic, members of the NIDCAP team have continued to provide care and support to babies and families by doing observations, providing care plans, and advocating for their optimal development. One way that we have done this is through NIDCAP Rounds. Team members at both the David Schiff and the Philip C. Etches sites round at least one to two times monthly to meet with families and provide on-the-spot, real-time developmental guidance in conjunction with observation and support for the infant. This also provides an opportunity for in-the-moment staff education, and it is our goal in the future to expand this offering to other units to reach more babies, families, and staff. As always, the Edmonton NIDCAP Team continues to play an important role in ensuring that the voices of the baby and family are heard and as such, there is a representative from the team on most NICU committees and working groups, from Feeding to Lung Health to Quality Improvement. We ensure that the developmental needs of the infants are always kept at the top of the agenda.



Teaching FINE



Crystal and Julia on developmental rounds

Scholarship of Developmental Care

Over the years, ENTCC team members have remained active NIDCAP community members and participants at the annual NIDCAP Trainers Meetings by presenting abstracts and journal club entries, in addition to facilitating small group discussions. We continue to contribute to research through a developmental lens and participate in quality improvement projects. In 2020, members of the team based out of the David Schiff NICU surgical/cardiac unit published² a paper about a quality improvement project in the surgical/cardiac population entitled Implementing a Skin-to-Skin Care and Parent Touch Initiative in a Tertiary Cardiac and Surgical Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, contributing to the knowledge base around this population.

In conclusion, ENTCC looks forward to 2023 as the start of a new year helping babies and families advance on their

pathways of optimal development. We intend to hold more educational workshops and expand online educational resources and we hope to re-energise formal NIDCAP and APiB training now that restrictions on travel are fading away. ENTCC and its activities continue to be supported by the Stollery Children’s Hospital Foundation. We thank them for naming NIDCAP a “Pillar of Excellence” and remain grateful for the ongoing trust and confidence in NIDCAP and the ENTCC in providing the best possible outcomes for babies in our care.

References

1. Peters KL, Rosychuk RJ, Hendson L, Coté JJ, McPherson C, Tyebkhan JM. (2009). Improvement of short- and long-term outcomes for very low birth weight infants: Edmonton NIDCAP trial. *Pediatrics*, 124(4), 1009–1020. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2008-3808>
2. Levesque V, Johnson K, McKenzie A, Nykipilo A, Taylor B, Joynt C. (2020). Implementing a skin-to-skin care and parent touch initiative in a tertiary cardiac and surgical neonatal intensive care unit. *Advances in Neonatal Care*, June 24, 2020 - Volume Publish Ahead of Print - Issue - <https://doi.org/10.1097/ANC.0000000000000770>



Mission

The NFI improves the future of all infants in hospitals and their families with individualized, developmental, family-centered, research-based NIDCAP care.

Adopted by the NFI Board, June 29, 2022

Vision

The NFI envisions a global society in which all hospitalized newborns and their families receive care in the evidence-based NIDCAP model. NIDCAP supports development, enhances strengths and minimizes stress for infants, family and staff who care for them. It is individualized and uses a relationship-based, family-integrated approach that yields measurable outcomes.

Adopted by the NFI Board, October 20, 2017