

AN ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE ON MEETINGS BETWEEN PARENTS OF PREMATURELY BORN INFANTS AND NURSING STAFF

Objective: To describe the meeting between parents with infants born prematurely and nursing staff, from an ethical perspective.

Methods: The basis for this work was previous studies based on interviews with six mothers and eight fathers. The purpose with the studies was to describe parents' experiences of having a child born preterm. Parts of the results are discussed from an ethical perspective.

Results: Parents are involved in difficult decisions and must make choices shortly after the baby is born. Being left without support in decisions concerning their child and then have to cope with it is difficult. Parents were not always involved in decisions concerning their child in the extent they wanted to be. Autonomy must be discussed with clarity in terms of self-determination and participation. Being involved in their infant's care, contributed to their sense of being a parent. Parents were mostly pleased with the meetings, even though it meant meeting staff with different experiences and characteristics. It was important for them to feel supported, which resulted in increased security and reduced anxiety.

Conclusions: Parents need to be met by nursing staff with sensitiveness to their needs and responses as individuals as well as a family. Nursing staff need to see parents as important to create the necessary conditions for giving their child the best care possible. Staffs must be aware of the impact of the birth of a preterm infant, therefore they must be open to meet and listen to parents' experiences.

Keywords: Parents, infants, prematurely, nursing, ethics.