Aim

To strengthen family functioning and bonding by involving and educating siblings in the family experience of the hospitalization of a premature or sick baby and therefore to promote family-centred care.

Method

Staff were asked to identify what they perceived would help improve the experience for siblings on this neonatal unit and their view on this subject. An anonymous questionnaire was delivered to 30 of the nursing staff in the neonatal unit.

Introducing the change

Their views were sought on the refurbishment of the family room to incorporate a designed sibling area.

The family room has been refurbished and it is now siblings friendly, where there is room for toys, NICU related puzzles and bookcases with children's illustrated and NICU themed books, funded by Bibs (Buscot ward charity organization), which parents can use also by the incubators/cots.

A parents' leaflet was devised, presented to the parents' panel and it is in the unit. It intends to assist them in their difficult job of dealing and explaining the unexpected situation to the baby's siblings in order to reduce the negative impact of the experience in that child's life.