INTRODUCTION

For preterm infants to be discharged home they must be able to maintain their body temperature in an open cot. Early transfer may cause the infant to become cold stressed leading to increased cellular metabolism and therefore poor growth (Hackman, 2001). The weight criteria for transfer differs in the literature but ranges from 1500g - 1600g. (New, 2011; Schneiderman et al, 2009; West et al, 2005)

AIM:

To safely wean an infant from an incubator environment to a cot.

Note:

- Infants < 1500g are to remain in the incubator unless otherwise advised by medical team.
- Incubator temperature should be 28°C or less for 48 hours prior transfer.
- Consistent weight gain for 7 days prior to transfer.
- Infant’s body temperature has been stable at ≥ 36.5°C for 48 hours.
- Avoid bathing the infant on day of transfer into cot.

EQUIPMENT

- Clean cot/Hard crib
- Clothing
- Hat
- Singlet
- Jumpsuit with long arms & legs
- Bed Linen
- Warm bunny rug

PROCEDURE
1. Confirm with senior staff that infant is ready to be transferred from incubator to cot. Check that the infant meets the following criteria:
   - Body temperature stable at $\geq 36.5^\circ$C.
   - No episodes of apnoea and bradycardia.
   - Consistent weight gain for the last 7 days if extremely low birth weight.

2. Inform parents of plan to transfer into a cot if possible. Ensure the presence of Identification labels X 2 on the infant and 1x label on feeding tube.

3. Attend to cares prior to transfer to cot.

4. Dress the infant in a singlet, jumpsuit and hat. \textbf{R1}

5. Wrap the infant in two warm bunny wraps from blanket warmer and place infant in cot.

6. Cover the infant with appropriate linen.

7. Check the infant’s temperature two hours post transfer and then at next cares. \textbf{R3}

8. Remove all linen from the incubator and transfer the infant’s belongings to cot.

9. Document time of transfer and temperature in the Observation Chart and nursing notes.

10. Keep incubator beside the infant until their temperature has been stable (36.5-37.1$^\circ$C) for 24 hours.

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\textbf{Note:} Infants to be returned to incubator if unable to maintain temperature $\geq 36.5^\circ$C. The decision to retransfer the infant to the cot will be decided by the treating team.
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\textbf{RATIONALES} & \\
\textbf{Rationale 1} & Prevent heat loss due to convection \\
\textbf{Rationale 2} & Prevent heat loss due to conduction \\
\textbf{Rationale 3} & Prevent unwrapping the infant whilst adjusting to new environment \\
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