

## KANGAROO MOTHER CARE IN SERBIA – OUR EXPERIENCE

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**Background:** It has been documented that the Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) offers better opportunities for babies and their families. This is why The Institute of Neonatology decided to start developmental care and KMC training and implementation.

**Objectives:** To describe the start of KMC education and implementation at The Institute of Neonatology.

**Methods and results:** The Institute of Neonatology is the biggest neonatal unit in Serbia, admitting approximately 850 – 900 high risk neonates from 53 maternity hospitals from all over the country.

In an attempt to improve the outcome of the babies and our knowledge, we started communication with the NIDCAP® training center from London, and in 2008 a NIDCAP® trainer visited our centre and we set short, medium and long term goals. In 2010 we completed the majority of the tasks: we achieved an improved appearance of the babies, colorful bedding, improved positioning, started using incubator covers and opened two separate rooms for intermittent KMC.

Rooms for KMC were created as a place not for skin-to-skin contact only, but as a place where families could have more privacy in a more homely atmosphere (2 hours daily). Parents' reactions were fantastic! Their satisfaction was really great, they felt being treated as a family with more understanding, attention and respect and they responded the same way. They started offering donations and asking how they can contribute to the program. Very soon the two rooms were not enough, they were occupied all the time, and the appointments had to be made two days in advance. In one year period there were 1704 visits to KMC rooms.

Actually KMC was a sort of the turning point and it contributed significantly to the respect and understanding, among the employees, of everything the NIDCAP team was trying to achieve.

The Institute started the "Partnership with Parents for Better Outcome" project, which includes NIDCAP®, KMC and introduced an open door policy. This project was approved to be implemented at The Institute by The Ministry of Health, Committee for New Technologies.

Team members held presentations on KMC at seminars and meetings, and were invited to speak about this new neonatal care method on several TV shows. The last TV show led to the launching of the "The Battle for The Babies" campaign, run by B 92 Fund. This offered several further opportunities:



