COINN Community of Neonatal Nursing Practice

**Title**: COINN Community of Neonatal Nursing Practice

**Lead Organization**: Council of International Neonatal Nurses (COINN)

**Country/Regio:**  Global

**Problem Statement** (100–150 words)

A lack of quality care remains a leading cause of mortality and morbidity among small and sick newborns. Effective care for this vulnerable group requires nurses with specialized knowledge, education, and clinical skills. However, in many countries, neonatal nursing is not formally recognized as a distinct specialty, resulting in limited policies, accredited courses, and structured training. Where specialized programs do exist, they are often fragmented and lack consistent standards. Additionally, there is a global shortage of qualified neonatal nurse educators, making it difficult to build a competent workforce. In response to these challenges, the World Health Organization (WHO) published a 2020 report—Human Resource Strategies to Improve Newborn Care in Health Facilities in Low- and Middle-Income Countries—emphasizing the need to invest in education and capacity building for neonatal care providers. The Council of International Neonatal Nurses (COINN) is actively addressing this need by advancing global education and professional development for neonatal nurses.

**Innovation or Practice Description (200–300 words)**

To help close the global gap in specialized neonatal nursing education, COINN established the Community of Neonatal Practice (CoNP)—a digital, interactive platform that connects nurses and healthcare professionals committed to improving neonatal care. The CoNP functions as a central hub for sharing resources, clinical experiences, and education, while fostering collaborative learning and professional growth across borders.

The platform is anchored by a dedicated website that offers a growing collection of evidence-based courses, webinars, and digital tools. Many of these resources were co-developed with representatives from African countries to ensure contextual relevance and cultural sensitivity. As the community expands, COINN continues to adapt and grow its offerings in alignment with the needs of neonatal nurses worldwide.

Currently, CoNP features three flagship courses:

* **Neonatal Orientation Externship Course**: A self-paced, foundational program for both new and practicing nurses and midwives entering neonatal units. It builds essential knowledge and clinical skills for caring for newborns, including small and sick infants.
* **Advanced Neonatal Continuing Education Course**: A six-month, in-depth course designed for experienced professionals, such as MSc-level graduates or educators. It enhances advanced clinical expertise and strengthens participants’ capacity to teach and lead within neonatal care settings.
* **Neonatal Preceptor Training Online Course**: Targeted at clinicians involved in mentoring new staff or students, this course includes six modules and is paired with a comprehensive Preceptor Manual. It equips participants with the skills to guide, assess, and support learning in neonatal units.

Through CoNP, COINN is building not just educational capacity, but a global, collaborative community of neonatal care leaders.

**Results and Evidence of Impact** (150–250 words)

The Council of International Neonatal Nurses (COINN) initially launched the Community of Neonatal Practice (CoNP) with a targeted focus on four African countries identified as having high need: Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and Zambia. These countries were selected based on indicators such as high neonatal mortality rates, gaps in specialized neonatal nursing education and COINN partners in country.

The goal was to create a supportive, knowledge-sharing digital community that could enhance neonatal care through accessible, high-quality resources, training, and peer engagement. From this focused beginning, the CoNP rapidly gained momentum, demonstrating both the demand and potential for such a platform beyond its initial geographic scope.

Remarkably, what began as a regional initiative has now grown into a global movement, with the CoNP reaching neonatal nurses and stakeholders in 158 countries around the world. This expansion highlights its relevance to diverse healthcare settings across low-, middle-, and high-income countries. The widespread adoption reflects a global recognition of the critical role nurses play in neonatal care and the urgent need for accessible, specialized support and education to empower them

**Scalability & Sustainability** (100–150 words)

The Community of Neonatal Practice (CoNP) has demonstrated significant scalability, expanding from its initial presence in just four countries on a single continent to reaching participants in 158 countries across the globe. This rapid and widespread growth underscores the global demand for accessible, high-quality neonatal nursing education and collaboration.

From a sustainability perspective, the CoNP initially relied on grant funding to support its launch and early activities. With that initial funding period now concluded, securing ongoing financial support remains a priority to ensure the continuity and expansion of its programs. Despite this challenge, the Council of International Neonatal Nurses (COINN) remains actively committed to the CoNP's success, continuing to provide support and pursue new funding opportunities to sustain and strengthen the platform into the future.

**Lessons Learned or Key Insights**

Creating the Community of Neonatal Practice (CoNP) website was a critical step in enabling the delivery of accessible, high-quality digital education to neonatal nurses across a wide range of countries. The platform served as a central hub for webinars, case studies, teaching materials, and other vital learning resources, allowing both individuals and groups to access content regardless of geographical location. This digital approach helped bridge gaps in professional development, especially in regions where formal neonatal nursing education is limited or unavailable.

However, during the project's first year, engagement levels could likely have been enhanced with a better understanding of the technologies and communication platforms most frequently used by nurses in various contexts. For instance, many nurses in low- and middle-income countries rely heavily on platforms like WhatsApp for professional communication and peer learning. Had this been incorporated earlier into the project’s communication strategy, it may have facilitated greater interaction, participation, and community building among users.

In addition, the lack of early multilingual support, particularly in French, limited the accessibility of key content for participants from Francophone regions, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. Earlier translation of webinars, case studies, and key resources could have significantly increased engagement and inclusion for French-speaking nurses.

**Partner Quotes or Community Voice**

On the CoNP website there are audio testimonials from nurse’s who have undertaken one of the courses. <https://www.conpcommunityofpractice.org/testimonials>