

PARENTAL PERCEPTION OF OPTIMISTIC VS. PESSIMISTIC PROGNOSTIC FRAMING IN THE NEONATAL ICU – A RANDOMIZED CONTROLLED CROSSOVER TRIAL (THE COPE-TRIAL)

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BACKGROUND Perspective of parents of very low birth weight infants (VLBWI) on prognostic framing as subtle aspect of prognostic communication in the neonatal ICU (NICU)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

2° Which effects may prognostic framing have on parental perceptions?

1° Do you prefer optimistic or pessimistic prognostic framing?



OUTCOMES & RESULTS

1° Parents' preference

89.1% of us (N=220) prefer optimistic framing (preference odds [95% CI]: 11.0 [6.28-19.1]; P<.0001).

2° Effects of optimistic prognostic framing

- Physician perceived as more professional (P<.001) and compassionate (P<.001)
- Parents feel better informed about prognosis (P<.001)
- Prognosis perceived as less unfavourable (P<.001)
- Parents more optimistic (P<.001) and more hopeful (P<.001) for VLBWI's future
- Recall of numerical estimates more accurate for survival (P=.002), but not for impairment (P=.161)

MATERIAL & METHODS

Interventions: Two standardised scripted video vignettes

△ Optimistic vs. pessimistic prognostic framing

Participants: Parents of former VLBWIs (birth: 2010-2019)

✓ Non-bereaved, mentally healthy, German-speaking

✓ Electronic informed consent

Design: Single-centre, randomised, controlled crossover trial

✎ 'Crossover': two groups, two videos in opposite sequence

✎ Online-survey

CONCLUSION & RELEVANCE

- Parents clearly preferred optimistic prognostic framing.
- Optimistic prognostic framing may have several positive effects from a parental and a medical perspective, i.a., on the physician-parent partnership.
- Neonatal physicians should be mindful, however, that optimistic prognostic framing may result in a realistic expectation of survival, but not of impairment.

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