FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Sparrow study reduces false alarms in neonatal unit  

LANSING, MI – Sparrow’s Regional Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (RNICU) is getting national attention for a research project that has helped Nurses reduce false and nuisance alarms from Patient monitoring equipment.

The project is aimed to combat alarm fatigue, a growing problem in hospitals across the country. The increased use of technology to monitor Patients has led to a rise in false and nuisance alarms that have nothing to do with the condition of the Patient but are related to the monitoring of equipment.

“Alarms on medical devices are meant to help us, but if we’re getting alarms that don’t have any clinical relevance, we’re just treating the equipment, not the Patient,” said Piper Probst, DNP, Director of Nursing Practice, Education and Research.

The study was a project by the Center for Innovation and Research, a collaboration between Sparrow and Michigan State University. Researchers wanted to measure whether efforts that have been shown to reduce alarm fatigue in the care of adult Patients would also work for infants. Researchers made several changes to standard procedures over a six-week period. The result? The RNICU saw a 50-percent reduction in false and nuisance alarms per bed, per hour in the 35-bed unit.

“That’s valuable nursing time that can be spent taking care of the babies and talking to parents, not troubleshooting the equipment,” Probst said.

The research team presented its findings at several academic and medical conferences last fall, including the prestigious Vermont Oxford Network annual neonatal quality forum in Chicago. The team also was invited to submit their findings to the Advances in Neonatal Care Journal.

The Sparrow RNICU provides around-the-clock care for premature and sick full-term babies under the supervision of MSU Neonatal faculty, specially trained Nurses, Physicians, and other health care professionals.

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Sparrow, a member of the prestigious Mayo Clinic Care Network, is mid-Michigan’s premier health care organization that includes hospitals in Lansing, St. Johns, Ionia and Carson City as well as Physicians Health Plan, Sparrow Physicians Health Network, the Sparrow Medical Group and the Michigan Athletic Club. Sparrow is affiliated with Michigan State University’s three human health colleges. Through these partnerships and the dedication of our 10,000 Caregivers, Sparrow pursues a vision to be nationally recognized as a leader in quality and Patient experience. For more information, visit Sparrow.org.