

# Neonatal Intensive Care at the UW Medical Center Montlake Tower

Choosing to do this work can't come easily it takes a special kind of person.

UW Medical Center's neonatal intensive care unit - the longest running program in the region providing expert compassionate care for at-risk babies and their mothers for more than 50 years. I've been with the University of Washington Medical Center neonatal intensive care unit since the late seventies. The NICU has been a pioneer in innovative healthcare advances for those early studies have led to widespread adoption of this technology throughout the world.

Everyone here is passionate about what they do, they are excellent at what they do. I love to take care of babies and I think that's the love that I have for this profession. It sounds strange to say but we often describe our experience here as wonderful and that's really because of the quality of care and compassion that the team showed to us.

Witnessing the teamwork, witnessing the amazing feats that our team does daily without, without heroism, without any you know fireworks going off is pretty amazing and humbling. Seven years in the making, the newly remodeled NICU at UW Medical Center integrates the most advanced medical technologies including dedicated operating room and pharmacy services with unparalleled privacy and comfort for patients and their families. Having a private room for us as a family has been really great. You can sleep there, you have access to computers. You have a refrigerator, laundry facilities and a shower, a kitchen. The first time I saw it I said wow, I wanted my room to be here. It's just beautiful. it's our space as a family.

At UW Medical Center NICU, each baby receives constant care from an interdisciplinary team of neonatal experts including specially trained physicians, nurses, respiratory and physical therapists, pharmacists, nutritionists, lactation specialists and social workers. The first time I walked in and saw how many people were in the room who all knew my child's name. Who all knew what was going on with him and all new the care plan was just phenomenal.

I don't think anyone expects to land here, but our experience has been great all things considere. The nurses and doctors are amazing and we're definitely part of the care team here. There is a strong connection between families and nurses in the NICU setting because we really encourage parents to get involved. One of the biggest miracles I get to witness that is so inspiring to me is these parents come in lost and afraid and overwhelmed and then to watch that transition into somebody who is an advocate for their kid and and able to provide with that child needs and really support their baby on on all different levels it's such a cool thing to witness. So I think that too - it's humbling and inspiring.

The NICU at UW Medical Center offers programs to foster community including the mentor program, parent groups and a sibling program that introduces children to their new baby brother or sister, providing care and support to the entire family.

One of our night nurses asked if I'd had my big cry yet and it was a right now and but it was a nice moment of humanity where they made it okay to be sad about what happened. Not sad about your baby but sad that it was it's different than what you planned. And so, I hold on to that one.

One thing that no one ever said to me but I say to parents all the time is you are in the right place. This is the right place for your baby. UW Medical Center's neonatal intensive care unit part of UW medicine working to improve health every day.