Newborn HeLP (Heat Loss Prevention)
Sinai Hospital of Baltimore

Program/Project Description.
Newborns admitted to the NICU had low temperatures (reflected in the NICU admission logs)
The goal is to have temperatures between 36.4-37.6 C

Process.
The Nursing process aligned with the Rosswurm Larrabee Research Model was the framework.
The Nursing Process is a feedback loop of: Assess/Diagnosis/Outcome Evaluation/Implementation/Evaluation while the Rosswurm Larrabee model is to:
* Assess Current practice & need for change; collect & Compare data
* Identify interventions, select outcome indicators
* Search research literature for best evidence that fits the situation
* Design the practice Change
* Implement & Evaluate the change (Pilot study demonstration)
* Communicate & Educate staff on change; integrate into practice

Solution.
A literature search revealed several solutions that were implemented in stages:
1. Woolen Hats
2. Polyethylene (plastic) wrap for very low birthweight babies (<1500 gms)
   Protocol development with above +
3. Delivery Room temperature increased to 75 (F) for same (< 1500 gm)

Measurable Outcomes.
see attached graphs
Very low birthweight (VLBW) babies temps are indeed higher, however the "bigger" babies aren't always in a normothermic range

Sustainability.
Audits are being done. with reports being delivered to Nursery and OB committees.
Meetings with MD and Nursing leadership are being held to explore the option of raising the Delivery Room temps in deliveries of "bigger" babies

Role of Collaboration and Leadership.
The Advanced Practice Nurse of OB did the initial literature review that resulted in the polyethylene wrap and increased temps in the OR. The Peds Chief Resident developed the protocol that is in use for the VLBW infants. The NICU and L&D managers review the audits, as do the Neonatalogists and OBs. The OBs were resistant at first to the increased temps of the OR, but became supporters with data review.

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The VLBW Infants are remaining normothermic; however the “bigger” PTI are not keeping their temps up.