

Feb 2026

# Polar Bear Care HIE Hold-A-Thon

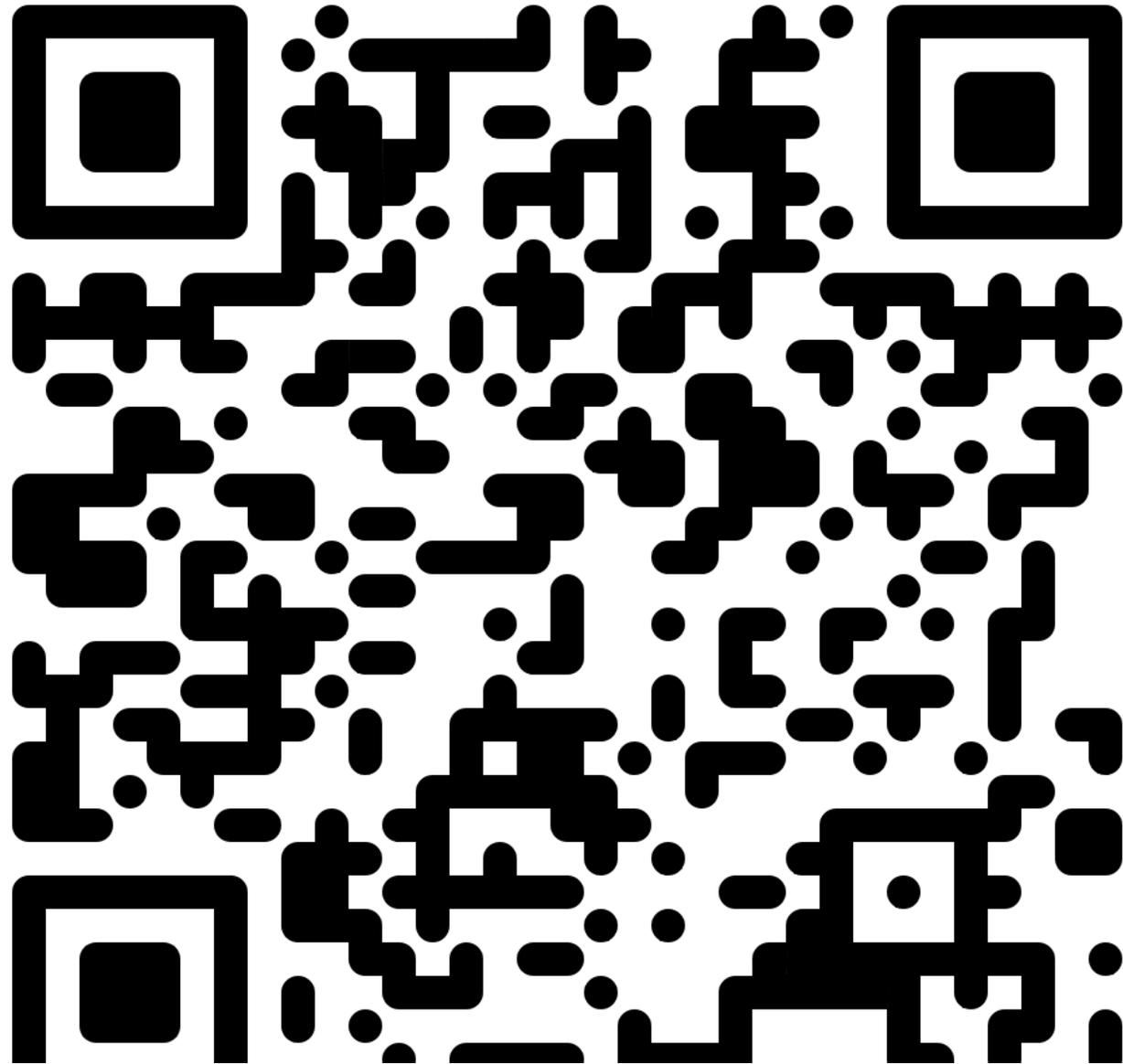
Updated center survey –  
please complete!



# Agenda

1. Review of Institutional Readiness Assessments
2. Interactive discussion of holding protocols
3. Staff education and training (family education focus in Mar)
4. Measures and metrics
5. Resources & next steps

# Institutional Readiness Assessment



# Report Your Institutional Readiness Score

- Anticipate having participating centers across the spectrum – from novice to expert
- Experts can help mentor newer centers
- Will be kept anonymous-center only to be used to eliminate duplicates!

# But we already hold – why participate?

## You're Not the Target Audience—You're the Teachers!

### Your Role in Hold-a-thon:

 **Mentor** sites just starting this journey

 **Contribute data** that demonstrates long-term safety and feasibility

 **Share your protocol** as a real-world example

 **Amplify** the message that this is achievable

 **Model** what family-centered NICU care looks like

### Benefits for Your Site:

National recognition as a leader

Policy review/refresh opportunity

Staff education reinforcement

Connection with peer innovators

Potential for publication/presentation

Advocacy impact beyond your walls

**Bottom Line:** Your participation validates and strengthens the movement. New sites need to see experienced centers saying "This works—we've been doing it for years."

# Institutional Holding Pathway

# Group Discussion

- Who has had multi-disciplinary meetings?
- Barriers?
- Successes?

# Staff Education

# Why Staff Education Matters

**Before implementing your pathway, staff need:**

- Understanding of HIE and therapeutic hypothermia basics
- Evidence supporting holding during TH
- Your institution's specific pathway details
- Confidence in safety protocols and troubleshooting
- Buy-in for culture change

**Goal: Every staff member feels prepared and confident, not anxious!**

# Core Content Areas

## Clinical Foundation

- HIE overview and therapeutic hypothermia mechanism
- Why temperature management matters

## The Evidence

- Benefits of holding during TH (bonding, development, family experience)
- Safety data - it CAN be done safely

## Your Pathway

- Eligibility criteria & assessment process
- Step-by-step procedures

## Practical Skills

- Transfer techniques & equipment management
- Documentation
- Family communication

# Delivery Methods – Choose What Works

## Formal Options:

- Mandatory in-service sessions (in-person or virtual)
- Online module (self-paced)
- Simulation or skills lab
- Competency assessment/sign-off

## Informal Reinforcement:

- Unit huddles and staff meetings
- Bedside teaching during early holds
- Champion-led "office hours"
- Quick reference cards at bedside

# Training Timeline

## February:

- Announce pathway approval and training plan
- Schedule training sessions
- Make materials available

## March:

- Conduct all mandatory training
- Track completion rates
- Address questions and concerns
- Have champions available for support

**Goal: 100% of relevant staff trained by April 1**



# Making Education Manageable

## Use toolkit templates:

- Staff slide deck → Add your pathway details
- Family handouts → Customize with your info
- Quick reference cards → Print and laminate
- Webinar recordings → Share links

## Focus your effort on:

- Your pathway specifics
- Your unit culture and workflow
- Your documentation requirements
- Your team's specific concerns

# Staff Education Discussion



## Let's troubleshoot together:

- What education challenges do you anticipate?
- What staff concerns have you already heard?
- What resources do you still need?
- How can we support each other?

## Share best practices:

- Creative education approaches
- Tips for engaging reluctant staff
- Family education wins

Measures

# Hold-A-Thon Committee Initial Metrics

- Total participating sites & retention rates
- Geographic distribution
- NICU characteristics
- Baseline & end policy prevalence
- Engagement metrics
- Media/social media reach
- Participant testimonials

**Updated center survey –  
please complete!**



# Optional Individual Site Metrics

## Safety metrics

- Temperature management
- Clinical events

## Utilization metrics

- Utilization rate =  $\# \text{ held} / \# \text{ eligible} \times 100$
- Average duration of holding sessions
- Time/age at first hold

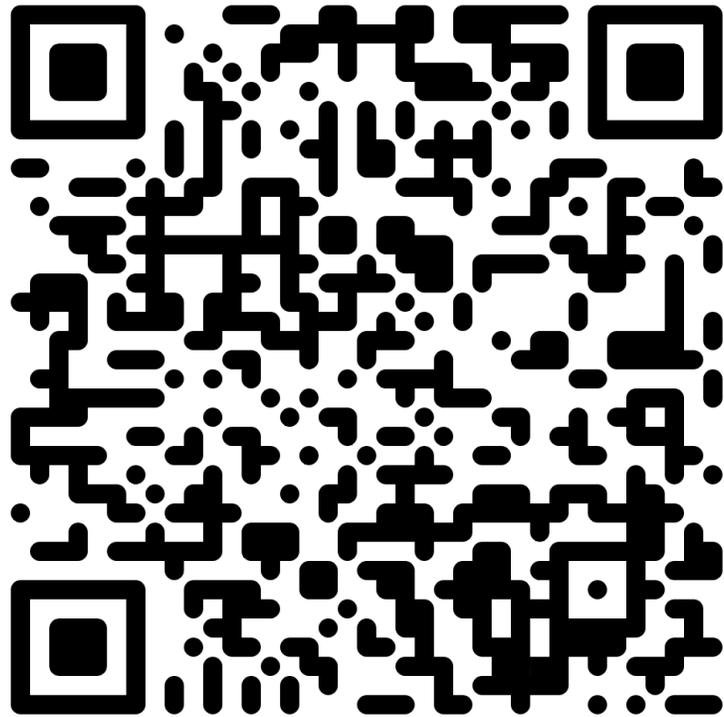
## Quality metrics

- % who completed training
- Staff concerns/questions raised
- Family satisfaction survey
- Compliance

# Toolkit Resources

# Website

<https://newbornbrainsociety.org/hie-hold-a-thon>



A screenshot of a web browser displaying the website for the HIE Hold-a-thon. The browser's address bar shows the URL https://newbornbrainsociety.org/hie-hold-a-thon/. The website header includes the NBS logo (Newborn Brain Society) and a navigation menu with items like ABOUT, EVENTS, MEMBERSHIP, NEWS, RESEARCH &amp; PUBLICATIONS, EDUCATION, OUR AWARDS, VOLPE'S VIEW, PROJECTS, NNCC ACCREDITATION, COMMUNITY CENTER, and SHOP MERCH. A language dropdown menu is set to English. The main content area features a teal banner with the title "HIE Hold-a-thon: Polar Bear Initiative" and the date "APRIL 2026". Below the banner, a paragraph describes the initiative: "During HIE Awareness Month, the Newborn Brain Society and Hope for HIE invite NICUs worldwide to participate in a clinician-led initiative supporting evidence-based holding and supportive touch for infants receiving therapeutic hypothermia." At the bottom, there is a section titled "What Is the HIE Hold-A-Thon?" with a sub-image of a polar bear and text explaining that the initiative is a voluntary, site-led effort to develop holding and touch guidelines for infants with HIE. The Windows taskbar is visible at the bottom of the screenshot, showing the time as 9:40 PM on 1/26/2026.

# Clinician Q&A

## HOLD-A-THON

for Newborns with Hypoxic Ischemic Encephalopathy



Common Health Care Professional  
Questions & Answers

Activate Windows  
Go to Settings to activate Windows.

# Nursing Scripts



## Hold-A-Thon

For Newborns with  
Hypoxic Ischemic Encephalopathy



HOPE for HIE

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## TRAUMA-INFORMED NURSING SCRIPT

For Holding During Therapeutic Hypothermia

(Based on Trauma-Informed Principles)

### Open with Safety and Emotional Validation

"I want to talk with you about something important. First, I want to acknowledge how overwhelming this is. Seeing your baby undergoing cooling, connected to so many lines and monitors, it can be really scary and overwhelming. Many parents tell me this is one of the hardest moments they've ever experienced."

# Holding How To Video

**Holding During Therapeutic Hypothermia**

*Demonstration on how to transfer*





Lisa Carruthers, RN, N-NIC,  
CHSE

# Engagement



Hold-A-Thon  
**BINGO**



HOPE for HIE

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| Initiated a first time TH hold   | Helped manage lines/tubing during a transfer                         | Provided positive encouragement during hold      | Took a photo of family during holding                       |
| Explained to parent what to expect during transfer                             | Remembered to move (and lock) chair closest to incubator for holding | Facilitated hang hugging for unstable baby on TH | Educated a he colleague about benefits of holding during TH |
| Ensured all lines and cables were well secured once patient transferred to lap | Myth busted a common misconception about holding during TH           | <b>FREE</b>                                      | Documented vital signs on baby's tolerance during holding   |
| Created tensor   | Reminded parent to   | Asked parent how                                 | Created tensor  |

**\*Holding during Therapeutic hypothermia (TH)\***

## **FACT OR FICTION**

- 1) Holding during TH offers no real benefit to the baby
- 2) A baby that seized 12 hours ago is safe to be transferred to a parent's lap for TH holding
- 2) Most lines (including aEEG and cooling mattress) may be disconnected if needed for transfer to parents' lap

Next Steps

# Register for March Meetings

FRI MAR 13 AT 9 AM EST



TUES MAR 24 AT 3 PM EST



# Review & finalize your institutional guideline for holding during TH



Gather key multidisciplinary stakeholders



Review evidence



Discuss options for inclusion/exclusion criteria and safety stops



Draft guideline



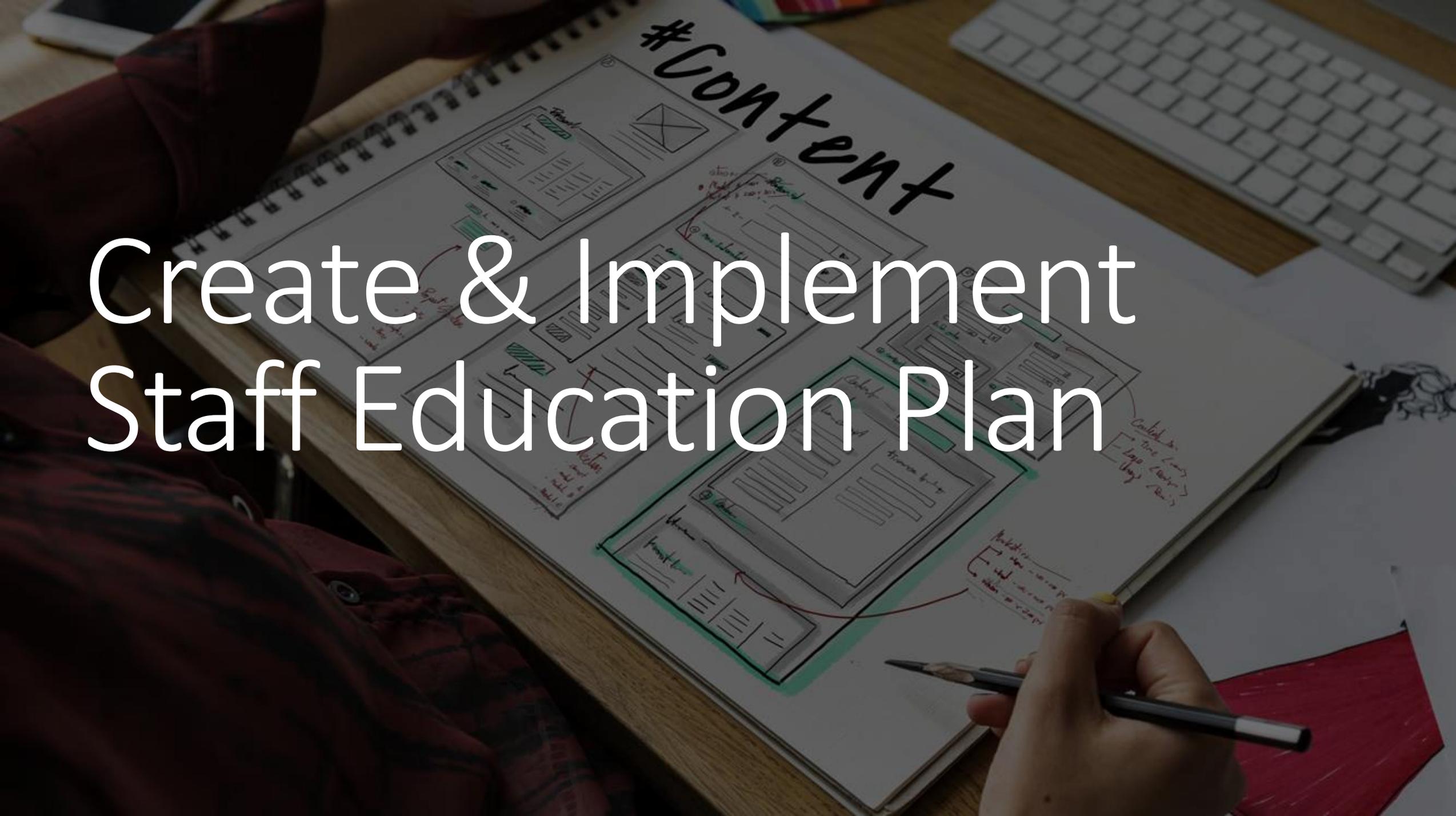
Distribute guideline for widespread review



Incorporate feedback & finalize guideline

#Content

# Create & Implement Staff Education Plan



# Contact Information

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# Hold-A-Thon

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For Newborns with  
Hypoxic Ischemic Encephalopathy



**NBS**  
NEWBORN BRAIN  
SOCIETY

HOPE **for HIE**