Maternal Medication/Substance Use
Quick Reference Guide

Infant at risk of Narcotic Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)

High Risk
Hx of elicit substance use
WANDAS Patient
Poly-substance use
Some maternal treatments (e.g. Methadone)

Low Risk
Maternal alcohol use
Maternal marijuana use
Some maternal treatments (e.g. Buprenorphine)

SSRI / SNRIs
Maternal depression
Maternal anxiety disorders e.g. Escitalopram (Lexapro)
Sertraline (Zoloft)
Venlafaxine (Effexor)

Symptom Profile
Vary with substance
Early (<24h) especially if recent use
Onset usually 3-4 days
Duration variable days - months

Symptom Profile
Vary with substance
Rarely require treatment
Buprenorphine:
Symptoms usually mild
Symptoms early (<24h)
Gradually resolve (1-2w)

Symptom Profile
Symptoms may appear shortly after birth (<12h)
Commonly:
Tremors, unsettled
Poor/difficult feeding

Always consider differential diagnoses!

NAS Scoring
Commence Finnegan chart at 2 hrs of age
Score infant 4 hourly

NAS Scoring
If symptoms suggest NAS
If possibility of other substance use

NAS Scoring
NAS scores not required

Score ≥ 8

Score ≥ 8 on 3 consecutive scores
Admit SCN
Discuss with paed consultant / SR
Handover to SCN registrar
Most babies needing Rx will discharge from SCN to home
Untreated infants returning to PNW should continue flowchart

Score ≥ 12 on 2 consecutive scores

Score < 8

Score 4 hourly until day 5 of age

Discharge Planning
Consider when:
Day 5 of age
Minimum 24 hrs with Score <8
Appropriate feeding and weight gain
Social supports in place
WANDAS / SW / Paed consultant OK