

THE GRADUATE COLLEGE OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

ANNOUNCES THE FINAL EXAMINATION OF

# Elizabeth Koldoff

FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE  
GRADUATE COLLEGE  
*Graduate Nursing PhD Program*



Monday, May 7, 2018, 10:00 am  
| Fran and Earl Zeigler College of Nursing Building, Room 222 |

## *Transition to Early Intervention for Infants with Very Low Birth Weight*

COMMITTEE IN CHARGE: Barbara Holtzclaw, PhD, RN, FAAN; Thubi Kolobe, PhD, FAPTA; Kathleen Knafel, PhD, FAAN; Mark Fisher, PhD, RN; Janet Sullivan-Wilson, PhD, APRN

**ABSTRACT:** *Introduction:* Despite recommendations for early interventions (EI), research findings show only half of parents of infants born with very low birth weight (VLBW) are enrolled in the first year of life. Central to the low participation rate is the role that parents play. The purpose of this study was to explore factors that influence parents to be involved in EI for infants with VLBW. *Methods:* A qualitative descriptive approach explored parents' experiences with EI for infants with VLBW. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with participants (n=30) who participated in the Self-Initiated Prone Progression Crawler (SIPPC) study or SoonerStart. Parents also filled out the Parent Behavior Checklist (PBC) and a demographic questionnaire. *Results:* Content analysis, performed through NVivo, generated 3 categories about participation in EI: Parental conditions, Parental barriers, and Parental beliefs. A word cloud was used to validate the findings and revealed the words, "Get," "child," "help" as the most dominant aspect. Frequencies were performed for the interpretations of PBC T scores and most parents' scores were average for all three subscales. *Conclusions:* Findings suggest a need to initiate NICU discharge planning earlier and information about EI shared by a trusted health care professional. Uncertainty of parents raises questions about focusing on a treatment plan, instead of the journey of the child and anticipating the needs of the whole family. The findings from the PBC provides evidence for NICU nurses that parents of infants with VLBW and parents of typical birth weight infants have similar beliefs about childrearing. Therefore, it should not be assumed that parents of infants with VLBW would have maladaptive parenting beliefs and behavior.