Parents of babies admitted to neonatal units experience an emotional journey. Feelings of helplessness, fear, sadness, guilt, grief and anger are common. These feelings can lead to anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress which may persist long after discharge from the unit.

Support from a parent with first-hand experience able to empathise with problems and challenges may help.

The research we are doing is called a ‘systematic review’. This brings together all the research evidence that has been done on this topic already to answer our questions.

We will search in databases of published evidence to identify studies.

The research team and parent advisory group will read summaries to see which studies should be included in our research.

We will gather the information we need from the included studies. We will collect the same data from each paper. This will help us to compare data across different studies.

We will judge how useful each included study is to answer our research questions.

We will bring our findings together and publish them in peer-reviewed journals. We will also present our results at conferences and use social media to make sure our research reaches a wide audience.