

# Collaboration of Neonatology and Early Childhood Intervention

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## What led to our collaboration?

- Only 1/3 of all families with children with special needs from 1 to 7 years old make use of early development intervention (analysis of the situation of early childhood interventions in the Czech Republic in 2015)
- Feedback from families – parents have a need for communication with neonatology and information and contacts for follow-up services: parents are alone in a difficult situation. From the perspective of medicine, children are monitored, but families lack advice on how to handle certain everyday situations with their new-born child
- Age of children at the time of contact with the centre – there is a delay of at least one year because the family had to wait until contact with a specialist

## Aim

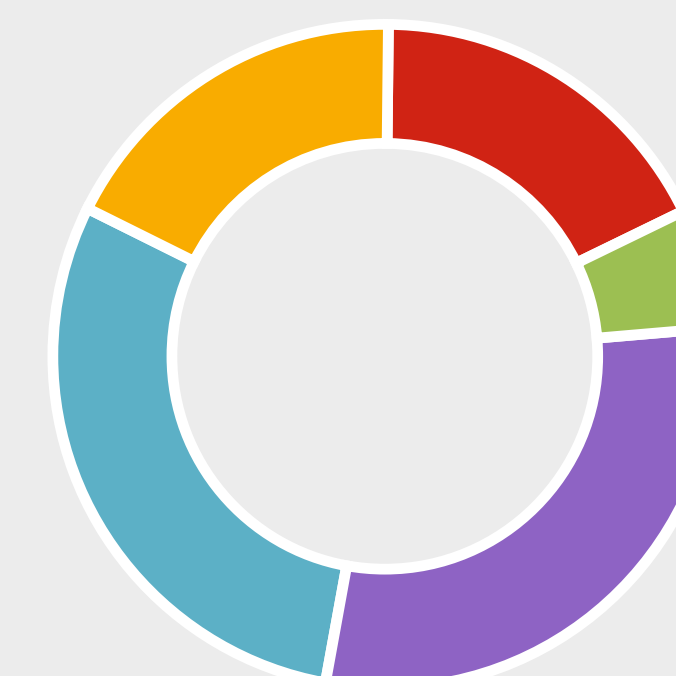
- A good beginning for the whole family - timeliness and prevention
- Awareness for families about the early childhood intervention service and its availability
- A transdisciplinary connection between professionals around the family, good collaboration between medical staff and social workers

## Gradual steps in collaboration

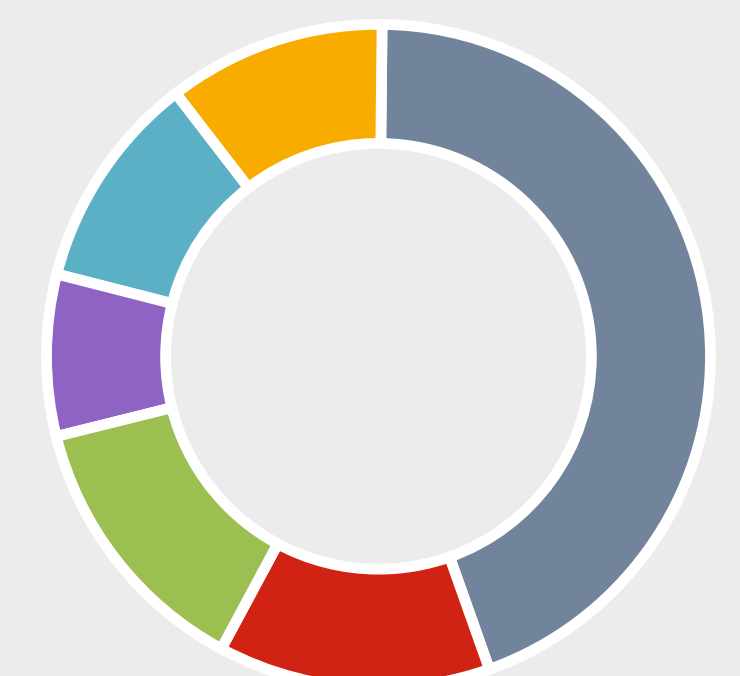
- Active contribution at neonatology conferences
- Seminars for the neonatology department
- **Milestone 2015** – families present their personal experience with hospitalisation at seminars, emphasising areas where changes in the approach towards families is necessary
- First step by neonatology – appointing a crisis interventionist, who will pass on information about the existence of the early childhood intervention service to families as soon as possible after the birth of an extremely premature new-born baby; psychological support for parents, identification of children with a risk of developmental problems and the need to use the early childhood intervention service
- We have become the place of first contact for families with new-borns at risk: based on the needs of families, we point them in the direction of a suitable early development intervention provider according to the target group
- Publications about the collaboration in professional journals
- Collaboration with governmental organizations – communication about the newly set up system for informing families in neonatology about early development intervention service and the necessity to increase their capacity



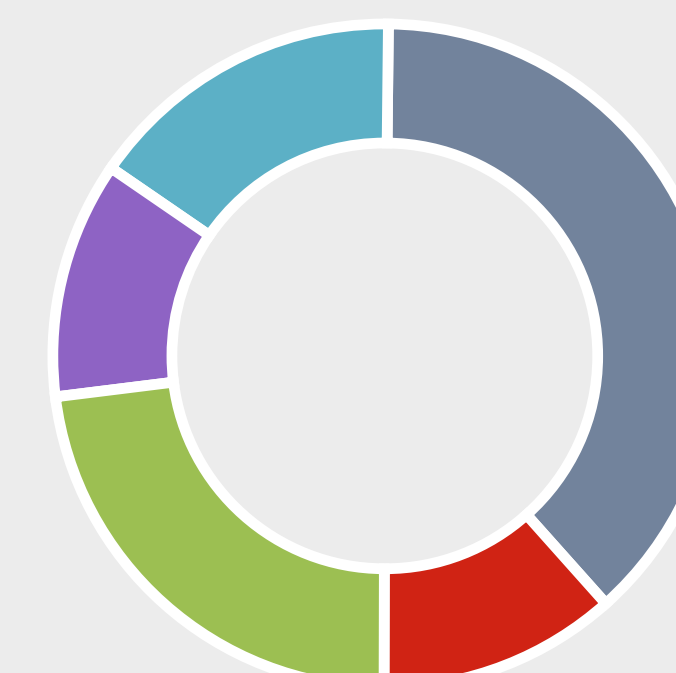
The age of a child at first contact in 2015



The age of a child at first contact in 2016

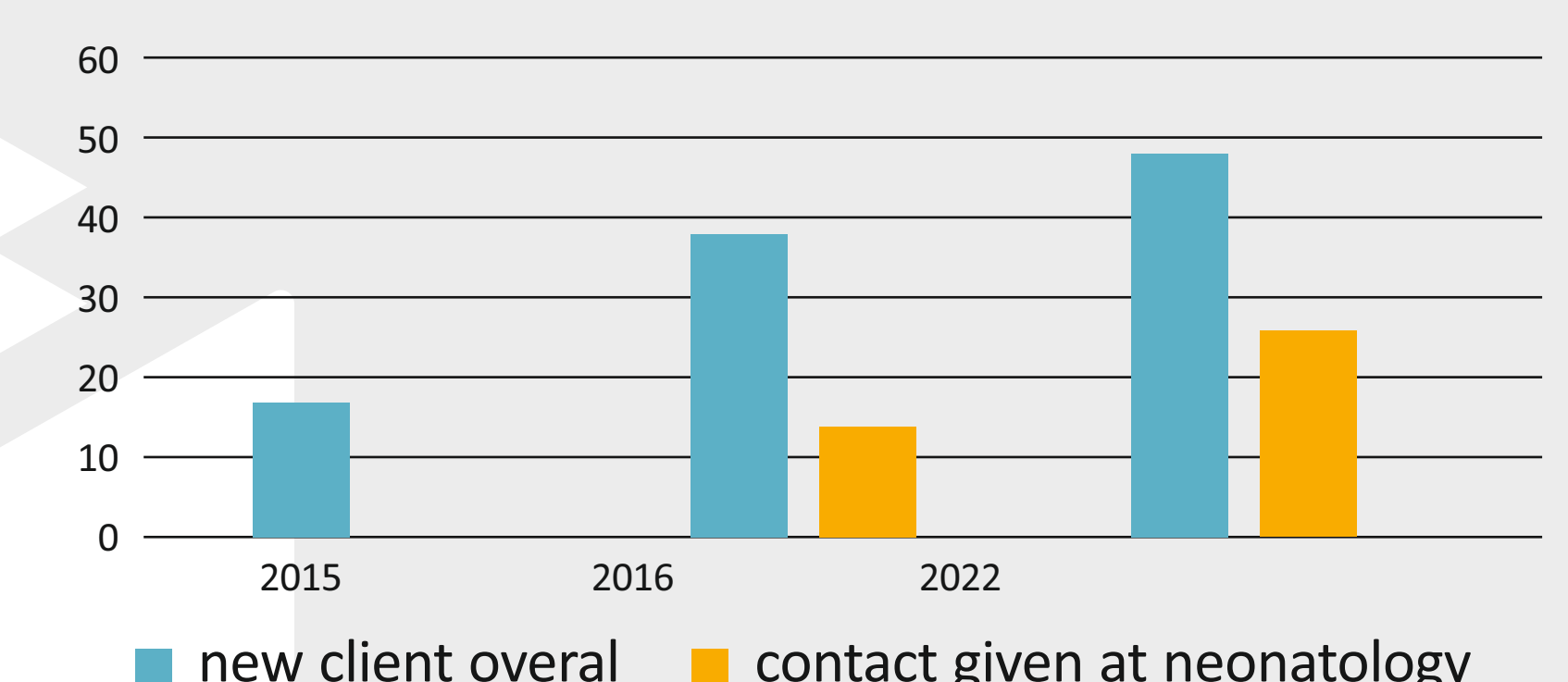


The age of a child at first contact in 2019



- up to 3 months old
- up to 6 months old
- up to 12 months old
- up to 2 years old
- up to 4 years old
- up to 7 years old

Early development intervention availability



## Result

- Increasing the capacity of the early childhood intervention centre in the region by 12 % in the past 3 years; that means 192 families more
- Decreasing the age of children entering the service
- ECI specialists can start collaborating with families directly in neonatology - beginning the service process
- Further professional consultations with families - e.g. instructions for handling with the help of a physiotherapy doll
- Mutual professional enrichment of medical staff and ECI specialists - workplace visits, seminars and consultations with doctors, case studies



## Summary

- A functional model that is transferrable to other regions
- Timely entry of families into the centre means shortening the time of its use; families use the prevention service for a maximum of 1.5 years. We can therefore support more families in this time
- Timely support of children's development means prevention of later complications for new-borns with a low birth weight
- Acceptance of the necessity of early childhood intervention as a follow-up service after a medical intervention. Early childhood intervention is viewed by professionals as crucial for supporting families with children whose life is at risk at the very beginning.

