

Pilot testing the clinical audit and implementation of neonatal brain MRI for North-Queensland infants at high-risk for adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes

ACTRN12622001584729

Status	RECRUITING
Sponsor	James Cook University
Enrollment	42 participants

Plain Language Summary

Premature babies and others who experience difficult births are at higher risk of developmental problems as they grow up. Brain MRI scans can detect early signs of brain injury and growth problems that can't be seen on a standard ultrasound, helping doctors identify babies who might benefit from early support or therapy.

This study tests the feasibility of performing neonatal brain MRI (without sedation, at around the baby's due date) at two North Queensland hospitals — Townsville University Hospital and Cairns Hospital — for babies identified as being at high risk. The goal is to see whether the program can be successfully implemented in a regional Australian context, following the model already established at Royal Brisbane Women's Hospital.

Your baby may be eligible if they were born very preterm (before 32 weeks), have low birth weight (under 1500g), experienced a hypoxic event (such as birth asphyxia), or have had a significant brain bleed identified on an ultrasound. Babies with known chromosomal abnormalities, those who are medically unstable, or whose families cannot provide consent are not eligible. The study aims to extend specialised brain monitoring to babies in regional Queensland who would otherwise miss this assessment.

Key Eligibility Criteria

Inclusion (1)

- Infants at risk including: (1) those born very preterm (<32 weeks gestational age), (2) those born with low birth weight (< 1500g), (3) those small for gestational age, (4) whom had a hypoxic event (e.g., Hypoxic ischaemic encephalopathy (HIE)) and /or (5) with severe intraventricular haemorrhage (Grade III-IV) or (6) those identified based on clinical grounds (such as an indication of brain injury from the cranial ultrasound). All infants will be scanned before or at term-equivalent age, except for infants born at term, who will be scanned within 7 days of delivery (e.g., those with HIE).

Exclusion (1)

- The following will be excluded: (1) Infants with known major congenital or chromosomal abnormalities (as identified as part of standard care), (2) those not treated at Townsville or Cairns Hospital's Neonatal unit, (3) those not medically stable (on ventilator) before or at term-equivalent age (i.e., infants need to be stable for a neonatal MRI), (4) infants who are unlikely to return to Townsville University or Cairns hospital for follow-up, or (5) families not able to give informed consent (due to diminished understanding and/or unable to understand or speak English while an interpreter is unavailable).

Locations (2 total)

Townsville University Hospital - Douglas, QLD, Australia
Cairns Hospital - Cairns, QLD, Australia

<https://www.anzctr.org.au/Trial/Registration/TrialReview.aspx?ACTRN=ACTRN12622001584729>

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