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Decision Making at the Border of Viability and in Critically Ill Newborn Infants

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Deadline for manuscript submissions:

closed (5 April 2024)

Message from the Guest Editors

Dear Colleagues,

The tremendous advances in neonatal medicine in recent years have made it possible for very immature preterm infants to survive. Newborn infants with complex and severe congenital disorders and malformations can be offered therapeutic interventions to prolong life and possibly even fully repair congenital defects. In the care of preterm and ill newborns, parents and the professional team have to consider neurodevelopmental outcome, disability-free survival, and quality of life in addition to survival alone when deciding on initiation, continuation, or discontinuation of active therapy. The right to live might come into conflict with the idea of perfect health in a situation where the patient's presumed will cannot be determined. On the other hand, the right to die in a futile situation might come into conflict with parents' or the professional team's resistance to end therapy. We hope to help clinicians through this Special Issue to be able to better counsel parents and guide them through the "decision-making process".



mdpi.com/si/92814

Special Issue