

UNEXPECTED SESSION IN NICU

When the deadline for the Iowa Legislative Session ended June 30, 2011, State Representative Tyler Olson and his wife, Sarah, knew the deadline for the birth of their second child was quickly approaching. Six days later, Willa Laurel Olson was born at Mercy's Birthplace.



Dr. Roger Allen, MD
Medical Director of Mercy's NICU

When Sarah's water broke, an evaluation at Mercy indicated the potential for the baby to be born with an infection. Baby Willa came out screaming at 5:30 p.m., but it wasn't long before her pneumonia became apparent and she struggled to breathe. The Olsons were thankful to have Mercy's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit immediately available for the special care needed for her recovery.

"This was a full-term, uneventful pregnancy and within the course of two hours after being born we were told she would have to stay in intensive care," says Tyler.

An IV provided the antibiotics Willa required and a feeding tube was inserted, as she didn't have the strength to nurse. The Olsons were informed their daughter would need to stay in the hospital for seven days. But the good news was that Mercy has NICU suites, which are specially equipped to allow parents to be near their babies and participate in their care. The 400-square-foot suites have private bathrooms with whirlpool tubs, comfortable beds and space for family

members to visit when the baby is ready.

Tyler notes, "It's priceless to have everything in the same room."

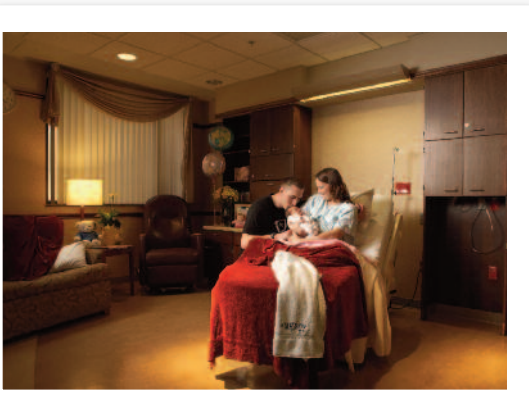
Sarah was discharged two days later, but

was able to remain in the suite with Willa at no additional charge. "I was able to interact with all the nursing staff as they tended to our child. As they did assessments, I got updates immediately. We wouldn't have received information on the spot like that if we weren't right there. We got excited about every little milestone," says Sarah, who remembers celebrating a 2 oz. weight gain one morning at 2 a.m.

Tyler spent as much time with his new daughter and wife as he could, but he was balancing his time at Mercy with taking care of their 3-year-old son, Leo. Tyler says "This has been the hardest on Leo. One night we had a pizza party in the room (at Mercy) and he watched cartoons."

Tyler says knowing Sarah was in the room with Willa while he was away was reassuring. "The ability for Sarah to sleep in the room while Willa was a NICU patient provided huge peace of mind – both for me and for Sarah. I could take care of my son knowing Sarah was in the room with Willa."

The area's most experienced neonatologist, Roger Allen, MD, Medical Director of the NICU, says, "At Mercy, we are committed to nurturing the whole family. Our advanced Level II NICU is designed to provide the extra care required for premature and ill babies 30 weeks gestation and up. In this case, we were able to provide the special care Willa needed and, at the same time, allow the family to bond with their new baby."



Representative Tyler Olson and his wife, Sarah, had a full-term baby daughter, Willa Laurel, who struggled to breathe shortly after birth and needed the extra care available at Mercy's Advanced Level II NICU.