

Table 2. Indicators of comfort and persistent pain used by neonatal staff in clinical practice, and proportion of staff citing each indicator

Indicators of Comfort	Indicators of Persistent pain
<i>Physiological indicators</i>	
Stable, normal heart rate (77%)	Rapid or unstable heart rate (53%)
	Slow heart rate (17%)
Stable, normal respiratory rate (65%)	Rapid or unstable breathing (28%)
	Apnoeic episodes (13%)
Stable oxygen saturations (54%)	Unstable oxygen saturations (13%)
Stable, normal blood pressure (41%)	Unstable or elevated blood pressure (19%)
Stable, normal temperature (13%)	Unstable temperature (4%)
Pink "healthy" colour (14%)	Poor colour, pale, mottled or red (17%)
<i>Facial expression</i>	
"Relaxed" face; no grimacing (46%)	Grimace, frown, tense face (72%)
No crying or appropriate crying (22%)	Excessive crying, high-pitched cry, moan (89%)
<i>Body posture and movements</i>	
Flexed posture, not tense (37%)	Tense, stiff, rigid posture (31%)
Limbs flexed and relaxed (8%)	Limbs extended (13%)
	Limbs tightly flexed (2%)
Relaxed hands and feet (5%)	Splayed hands or feet (7%)
	Curled or clenched hands or feet (7%)
Soft, flowing movements (7%)	Writhing, squirming or jerky movements (7%)
No excessive movements (10%)	Excessive activity, "thrashing" (26%)
	Still, quiet, lethargic (25%)
<i>Response to handling</i>	
Alert and stable on handling (20%)	Withdrawing, agitated, or irritable on handling (20%)
	No response on handling (2%)
Settles easily after handling (4%)	Difficult to settle after handling (22%)
<i>Sleep patterns</i>	
Periods of undisturbed sleep (37%)	Disturbed sleep, short sleep periods (26%)
Quiet, "contented" sleep (42%)	
<i>Subjective opinion</i>	
General impression of comfort (67%)	