



25 JAN, 2020

## Babycam boon for parents

Manly Daily, Sydney

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## Julie Cross

FAMILIES of premature or sick babies at Northern Beaches Hospital can watch their little ones on their mobile phones 24/7 after special cameras streaming live video was installed over each cot.

The baby CCTV has been set up in the special care nursery so parents at home, work or on the go can check on their babies.

Hospital boss Andrew Newton said the system gives parents the opportunity to bond with their babies while they are still in hospital.

“Babies born prematurely or needing special care can be in hospital for several weeks, putting strain on families, particularly if they have other children at home to care for,” Mr Newton said.

“While the cameras can’t replace real visits, hopefully they will help ease the anxiety felt by parents when they are separated from their baby when at home or work.”

The cameras are mounted at each baby’s bedside and transmit images of the baby through a secure and private closed system.

The babycam produces a streaming image that travels securely with up to 256-bit SSL encryption, the current web standard, similar to online

banking.

Cameras do not transmit sound and do not record video.

Nutcha Chaemkhun, 37, of Dee Why, is mum to preemie Jasper, born at 33 weeks. Although she spent all day with him at the hospital, leaving him was always difficult.

“The video has been amazing,” she said. “It has given us comfort and relief.”

Ms Chaemkhun said both her family in Thailand and her partner Laurent Anne’s family in France have been able to tune to the live stream from the other side of the world.

She said watching him on her phone also helped when she expressed milk at home.

A total of 1721 babies have been delivered at Northern Beaches Hospital since it opened in October 2018.

The special care nursery is for babies born prematurely or in need of special care after birth. The unit cares for about 10 babies a week.

Special care nursery nurse unit manager Kristen Boyd said Northern Beaches Hospital has cared for 521 babies in the unit over the past year.

“It’s often a difficult time for parents when their baby is born preterm,” Ms Boyd said.

“Many parents feel distant from their baby when they have

to leave them in hospital. The cameras can give them a feeling of being connected at all times.”



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Nutcha Chaemkhun with her baby Jasper. Picture: Monique Harmer