Perinatal Care During COVID-19

June 1, 2019

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About the Quality Institute

• We are a nonprofit, nonpartisan, multi-stakeholder advocate for health care safety, quality, and affordability for everyone.

• We are a membership organization, with over 105 member organizations across all of the sectors of the health system.

• We accomplish our mission through:
  ▪ Policy changes
  ▪ Community Health and Wellness programs
  ▪ Education
  ▪ Quality Improvement
Recommendations of the New Jersey Perinatal Care During COVID-19 Work Group

Recommendations can be found at: www.njhcqi.org/maternity-care

Will be updated weekly on Fridays
• Recommendations are divided into the following topics:
  ▪ Prenatal Care
  ▪ Triage & Testing Guidance for Facilities
  ▪ Labor & Delivery
  ▪ Postpartum Care
  ▪ Alternative Birthing Sites
Prenatal Care

• Where appropriate and feasible, routine prenatal visits can be conducted via telehealth.

• **Conduct social determinant of health screens early** in pregnancy and continue to re-evaluate throughout the pregnancy.

• Consider additional education and support needs of patients during COVID-19.
  - Start conversations early about breastfeeding, support persons, delivery procedures, supplies needed, and contraception

• **Communicate changes** in policies and protocols widely (i.e. in office, on website) and in multiple languages.
Triage & Testing Guidance for Facilities

- If COVID-19 PCR testing or rapid antigen testing methods are available, test all pregnant patients prior to or at the time they present at the facility.
  - Allows the patient and their health care team to identify the best plan of care
- If COVID-19 PCR testing or rapid antigen testing methods are limited, prioritize testing based on the patient’s clinical presentation and history
• All patients are allowed one, asymptomatic support person for the duration of their birthing experience.
  - DOH issued this guidance on March 29, 2020
  - Signed into state law on May 15, 2020
  - Consider Changing DOH guidance to allow facilities to also allow Doula in addition because part of care team

• All health care providers and institutions should follow the CDC’s recommendations for PPE use optimization.
  - Educate patients on what to expect

• L&D units should have plans in place to accept patients being admitted with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
Postpartum Care

• Separation of infants from patients
  ▪ Educate patients early on the benefits of skin-to-skin contact and the potential for horizontal transmission of COVID-19 to infants
  ▪ Shared decision-making should fully involve the patient
  ▪ Assess the patient’s ability to maintain separation at home

• Lactation guidance
  ▪ Educate patients on the known protective benefits of breastfeeding as well as the potential risks of direct breastfeeding during COVID-19
  ▪ Shared decision-making should fully involve the patient
  ▪ Whether patient chooses to breastfeed, pump, or use donor milk, educate on infection prevention strategies
Postpartum Care-2

- Newborn nursery/NICU protocols
  - Infants with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should be isolated from asymptomatic or COVID-19 negative infants
  - Consideration should be given to the following before an infant is separated from the patient:
    - Ability of the patient to maintain separation once discharged
    - Separation of the infant is not without risk of infant exposure to COVID-19 by an asymptomatic health care provider
    - Whether a better use of the admission stay would be to educate the patient on strategies to prevent COVID-19 transmission and protect the infant

- Prior to discharging, consider additional education and support needs of patients during COVID-19.
  - Protocol changes on postpartum and pediatric follow-up visits
  - Web-based resources
  - Availability of supplies needed
  - Signs and symptoms to look for
Alternative Birthing Sites

• Encourage patients to talk with their physician/midwife/doula before changing their birthing plans

  • Hospitals and licensed birthing centers are putting protocols in place for birthing during COVID-19

  • Patients should be made aware of changes to protocols and provided an opportunity to express their concerns, fears, anxieties and ask questions
Additional Resources in the Report’s Appendix

- Short- and Longer-term Policy Recommendations
- Patient Education Resources
- Professional Resources
- Postpartum Contraceptive Care Resources
- Suggested Supplies for Patients
- Available Resource Support Through Insurers
Thank You

For any questions, please contact:
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