

# FOURTH TRIMESTER CONTACT

Evangelical Community Hospital  
The Family Place  
Lewisburg, PA

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# Comprehensive Perinatal Education Program

- **Implemented May 1995**
- **Addressed shortened maternal/newborn hospital stay**
- **Provided mothers and newborns with more attentive follow-up post discharge**
- **Met HMO's requirements for comprehensive pre and postnatal care**
- **Based on Greenwich Hospital's Tender Beginnings Postpartum Visit (Greenwich, CT)**
- **All mothers/newborns delivering at The Family Place are eligible to participate**

# Program Components

## ➤ Prenatal Education

- “Your Childbirth Experience: A guide for pregnancy, birth and parenting” booklet
- “Health Clips,” online educational video clips
- Promotion of childbirth classes

## ➤ Preadmission Visit

- Scheduled after 34 weeks gestation
- Preadmission assessment initiated in the patient’s EMR
- Orientation to The Family Place and Labor and Delivery Unit
- Time to identify problems and address concerns

## ➤ Postpartum/Newborn Visit – **Fourth Trimester Contact**

# Fourth Trimester Contact Visit

- Meets ACOG recommendation for care contact within the first three weeks from discharge (ACOG, 2019)
- Appointment scheduled at time of discharge
  - 45-minute appointment
  - 24-48 hours after discharge
  - Monday-Friday 9 am-3 pm
  - Saturday appointments for special circumstances

# Overview of Visit

- Maternal physical assessment
- Maternal depression screening
- Newborn physical assessment
  - Repeat screenings as necessary (hearing, bilirubin)
- Feeding assessment
  - Breast and formula
  - Lactation assistance

# Overview of Visit (cont.)

- Review of infant and self care
- Referrals as needed
- Follow-up phone call one week after the postpartum/newborn visit with additional phone support if needed

# How Our Program is Supported

## Staffing

- 1 FTE RN – NCC Certified, IBCLC/CLC
  - Incorporates lactation hours
  - Responsible for policy/procedure development
  - Communicates with physician offices

## Setting

- Dedicated room close to OB Unit equipped with
  - Scales
  - Crib/bed
  - BP Monitor
  - Hearing Screener
  - Bili meter

# How Our Program is Supported (cont.)

## Funding

- Postpartum/newborn visit hours are applied to the hospital's community benefit hours (Evangelical Community Hospital is a nonprofit hospital)
- RN hours are budgeted in The Family Place OB Unit as patient education



# Benefits and Successes

## ➤ Earlier identification of problems

### Maternal

- Preeclampsia leading to readmission
- Incisional infections/abscesses
- Undiagnosed vaginal lacerations
- Depression
- Thrombophlebitis
- Possible pulmonary embolism
- Mastitis

### Newborn

- Jaundice (3 cases with bilirubin >30)
- Heart murmurs (1 case led to undiagnosed heart defect)
- Significant weight loss
- Circumcision infection

# Benefits and Successes

- Feeding Support
  - On occasion, mother changes decision from formula feed to breastfeed
- Postpartum/newborn visit is an additional opportunity to provide patient education and follow-up
- Continuity of care increases satisfaction for the patient, family, physicians, and staff

## A Few Numbers

- In FY 2018-2019, there were **778** live births at Evangelical Community Hospital
- Preadmission visit rate was **74%**
- **Fourth Trimester Contact** – postpartum/newborn visit participation rate was **88%**
- **43** outpatient lactation consults

# Challenges

- No electronic documentation
  - Visit is documented on standardized form and scanned into patient's chart
- Misunderstandings regarding the purpose of the visit
  - Lack of understanding that this visit is distinct from the physician's 1-2 day newborn visit
  - Mothers not aware this visit is also for them
- Transportation can be a barrier
- Members of the Plain Community often choose not to participate

# Feedback

- Patient comments are overwhelmingly positive
  - “I just couldn’t wait to come back and see you.”
  - “I wish this visit was available when I had my other child.”
- Strong physician support for the program

# Questions and Answers