

Wisconsin Hospital Association, Inc.



NEWS

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Expectant Parents Can Find Hospital Birth Care Services, Information Online *Wisconsin hospitals report quality, safety information on birth-related services*

MADISON (May 19, 2010) ---- Planning for the arrival of a new baby brings questions and decisions about the type of hospital care that is desired for the mother and the newborn. Parents-to-be will find a wealth of new information on the Wisconsin Hospital Association's CheckPoint Web site (www.wiCheckPoint.org) helpful as they partner with their physician and hospital in anticipation of their baby's birth.

This latest, and one of the largest, releases of information builds on the commitment Wisconsin hospitals made in 2004 with the launch of the public reporting program, CheckPoint (www.wiCheckPoint.org), to make health care transparency, quality and safety top priorities. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality has recognized Wisconsin as providing the highest quality health care in the nation.

Nearly 60 Wisconsin hospitals now provide information to CheckPoint about their birthing services, as well as hospital-specific results on seven quality indicators associated with the birthing process. Sponsored by the Wisconsin Hospital Association, CheckPoint is the most expansive voluntary hospital public reporting effort in the country, with more than 90 measures related to the quality and safety of care provided to patients.

"The birth information is perhaps the most consumer-friendly report on CheckPoint to date," according to Dana Richardson, WHA vice president of quality. Richardson said WHA surveyed expectant and new parents to determine the types of information that they were seeking as they made decisions about where their child would be born. Their feedback was then used to determine what information and online reports would be most helpful to expectant parents when selecting a birth hospital based on the quality and safety of care they expect to receive.

Richardson said the purpose of the CheckPoint information, especially the new birthing information, is to provide expectant parents with clinical quality information that will help facilitate a conversation with their health care provider.

"The most important element of any interaction between a patient and care giver is a clear understanding of the expectations about the care that will be provided," according to Richardson. "The new information on CheckPoint gives patients a background on what services are possible, which in turn can be used to initiate a conversation with the health care team to ensure the patient's expectations can be met," she added.

The birthing-related information on CheckPoint is divided into two service categories: clinical and safety, and education and support. Clinical services include medical services that occur during the delivery process, such as epidural pain medication. Finally, there are many

educational opportunities that hospitals provide while the mother is still in the hospital and after discharge to increase knowledge and comfort with the care of a newborn. All the birthing services reported in CheckPoint were selected because they have a positive impact on the safety and outcome of care.

The birth-related clinical data is collected by hospitals and reported to PeriData.Net. PeriData.Net is supported by participating Wisconsin hospitals through a partnership between the Wisconsin Association for Perinatal Care and the Center for Urban Population Health.

"The PeriData.Net information system is used by hospitals throughout Wisconsin to monitor the quality of care that they provide to their patients," according to Ann Conway, executive director of the Wisconsin Association for Perinatal Care. "The use of this information to publicly report hospital performance for consumers on WHA's CheckPoint is exactly how we envisioned PeriData.Net should be used. We are pleased to have WHA as a partner."

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*The **Wisconsin Hospital Association** is a membership organization that advocates for the ability of its members to provide high quality health care services to Wisconsin communities. Learn more at www.wha.org*

*The **Center for Urban Population Health** is a collaboration of the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Aurora Health Care. Learn more at www.cuph.org*

*The **Wisconsin Association for Perinatal Care** is an individual membership non-profit association with the goal of providing excellent health care to women, infants and families in an ever-changing health care environment. Learn more at www.perinatalweb.org*