

Maternity and Newborn Clinical Network news

July 2009

Introduction

The Maternity and Newborn Clinical Network (MNCN) has moved into its next phase with the Capability Framework nearing completion, the Induction of Labour (IOL) and Care of the baby with short term transitional problems in the postnatal areas i.e. Special Care Nursery (SCN) project and the Vaginal Birth After Caesarean (VBAC) projects all of which are covered in more detail in this newsletter. These activities have had the secondary benefit of enhancing network relationships across the state between the participating clinicians, a critical component in building a functioning and productive network.

The experience from successful clinical networks clearly shows that a key requirement is the active involvement of clinicians, the function of the management team being to give support to the local groups and to facilitate their endeavours to improve clinical practice and outcomes.

Following the **Clinical Forum on the 30 July**, we anticipate that the IOL and Care of babies with short term transitional problems Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPG) will be refined and then made available to all maternity services so that our first set of evidence informed CPGs can be rolled out to help achieve state wide best practice.

Prof Jeremy Oats
Clinical Chair

Victorian Maternity & Newborn Capability Framework

The State-wide Maternity & Newborn Capability Framework summary is now complete. Thank you to all who have provided feedback. The complete document is in the final writing stage, with anticipated completion this month. The document will then be presented to the advisory group and leadership group prior to being submitted to the Department of Human Services for endorsement.

MARCH - Maternity Audit Reduces Clinical Harm

February forum

The state-wide forum conducted 12 February 2009 provided an opportunity for the 80+ participants to refine audit tools before being distributed and applied at 32 Victorian public health services that provide maternity care.

MARCH audits

The MNCN management team is grateful to health service staff who completed surveys of practice for Induction of Labour and Admission to Special Care Nurseries, and coordinated medical record audits using the tools developed by expert clinical advisory groups and endorsed by the MNCN Leadership Group. Expert clinical advisory groups have been busy considering the **MARCH** results.

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MARCH results will be discussed in detail at the next state-wide forum **30 July 2009, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.**

Surveys of Practice responses provide valuable information about current clinical practice within a hospital. Local documentation which supports practice (e.g. policies, protocols, guidelines, memos etc) were also returned with the surveys. **MARCH** activities are expected to lead to the development of state-wide standards for IOL and babies with short term transitional problems. Implementation of the standards will be measured by re-auditing over time. The MNCN also expects to see reduced outcome variation in the Victorian Maternity Performance Indicator Report.

Vaginal Birth After Caesarean (VBAC) project

There are 19 health services involved in the VBAC project. Visits and forums have been conducted with Horsham, Bendigo, Bairnsdale, with Stawell and Sunshine planned for July and August. Health Services are reminded to prepare their work plans prior to the follow up meeting and to advise the MNCN management team how these plans are progressing.

Special Care Nursery project

The focus of the special care nursery project is keeping mothers and babies together. There are 16 hospitals participating in this project and they returned surveys of practice yielding a wealth of information and options for potential improvement projects.

The expert advisory group has considered the responses in their formulation of recommendations for state-wide application which will be presented for discussion at the **forum on July 30 at Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.**

Induction of labour project

There are 30 hospitals participating in this project and they returned surveys of practice yielding a wealth of information and options for potential improvement projects.

The expert advisory group has considered the responses in their formulation of state-wide standards which will be presented for discussion at the **forum on July 30.** Invitations have been sent to CEO's of project hospitals.

Zones

The work undertaken by the MNCN through the MARCH activities, and the system-wide thinking that has underpinned the development of the capability framework, has reinforced the importance of having effective referral pathways and trusted relationships between service providers. In the context of this work, the Leadership Group has started to explore whether it is now timely to adopt a geographical structure to facilitate application of its agreed standards of care. In preliminary discussions on this matter it was agreed that clinical standards would be developed and applied on a state-wide basis to reinforce the goal of reducing variation. Work is now underway to analyse birth numbers, population projections and relationships between providers to guide thinking on the nature of possible sub-groupings.

Victorian Maternity Quality and Safety Committee

The committee is now planning for the next Victorian Maternity Performance Indicator Report. Dr Michael Fotheringham is reworking the business rules to improve usability and accessibility. There will also be further improvements to the indicator suite. The committee is also developing a Quality Framework for Victorian Maternity Services to assist health services with local quality improvement activities. The framework will align with those already used in health services. Your feedback is important and encouraged, and should be directed to sue.sinni@dhs.vic.gov.au

Conferences – spreading the MNCN news

The MNCN will be presenting at the upcoming Australasian Association of Quality in Health Care conference in Sydney and the Australian College of Midwives national conference in Adelaide. We will discuss the MARCH audit processes and subsequent activities.

These presentations provide an opportunity to share how the MNCN implemented the proposed workplan which was introduced at these conferences last year.

Members of the MNCN Leadership Group

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|-------------------|------------------|
| Kate Birrell | Theresa Bowditch |
| Michael Delahunty | Wei Qi Fan |
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| Leonie Henderson | Anne Hotchin |
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Members of the Victorian Maternity Quality and Safety Committee

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