

TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health

DATE: 2015 June 18

HEALTHY BABIES HEALTHY CHILDREN POSTPARTUM SCREENING

Recommendation

It is recommended that Report No. 038-15 re Healthy Babies Healthy Children Postpartum Screening be received for information.

Key Points

- Changes are being implemented in Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) Program Screening to improve screening rates and compliance with program requirements.
- At London Health Sciences Centre, the Screening Liaison Public Health Nurse began completing postpartum screening in partnership with hospital nursing staff effective March 30th.
- An HBHC Partnership Agreement with LHSC is under development.

HBHC Program Screening

HBHC Screening in Ontario is completed prenatally, postpartum and with families with children under the age of 6 as a process to identify and offer program services to vulnerable families that would benefit from home visiting support for effective parenting and healthy child development. HBHC Postpartum Screening has been identified by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) as a priority for improvement as part of the Continuous Quality Improvement activities required for Health Units in 2015. The HBHC Screen is attached as [Appendix A](#) to this report.

Postpartum Screening in Hospital

HBHC Postpartum Screening, although required by MCYS to be universal, has been occurring at well below the provincial target of 100% at London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC). In 2014, the screening rate was 65%. While LHSC recognizes the importance of the HBHC program and is committed to supporting universal screening with families, postpartum screen completion has continued to be a challenge using the approach of screens being completed by hospital nursing staff.

In Ontario, most health units now have Public Health Nurses (PHNs) in hospital providing postpartum screening at the bedside in partnership with hospital staff. Provincial evaluation research indicates that the Postpartum Screen completion and accuracy are most effective when completed by a PHN. In 2012, MCYS implemented funding a fulltime PHN at each Health Unit dedicated to Hospital Liaison Screening. Some health units have achieved screening rates over 95%, demonstrating the effectiveness of this model. Based on this information, the model for HBHC Postpartum Screening at LHSC changed effective March 30, 2015 as a strategy to improve both the screening rate and the quality of screen completion. A draft partnership agreement supporting this model has been developed and is in the process of being reviewed for approval by both organizations.

The MLHU Screening Liaison PHN's expanded role at LHSC for completing HBHC screening in partnership with hospital nursing staff is as follows:

- Weekdays: Screening Liaison PHN completing postpartum HBHC screening
- Weekends and Statutory Holidays: Hospital nursing staff completing HBHC postpartum screening
- Other Screening Liaison PHN activities: In addition to screen completion include continuing to provide training of hospital nursing staff; supporting quality assurance for completion of the screens; and coordinating communication of the screens to the Health Unit.

At the Strathroy Middlesex General Hospital, postpartum HBHC Screening continues to be completed by hospital nursing staff with support activities being provided by our Screening Liaison PHN.

Conclusion

In 2015 multiple Continuous Quality Improvement initiatives are being implemented to improve compliance with HBHC program requirements which will result in improvements in program services provided and outcomes for families in our community. This change in the screening process at LHSC is an important strategy in our efforts for improving postpartum screening rates at LHSC; and HBHC program and service delivery to families.

This report was prepared by Ms. Nancy Greaves, Ms. Kathy Dowsett and Ms. Mary Huffman, Managers of the Best Beginnings Team, Family Health Services.



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