

AWHONN's Postpartum Discharge Education Program Frequently Asked Questions

What is AWHONN's Postpartum Discharge Education Program?

The postpartum period is a critical time to ensure women and their newborns are healthy. It is important to closely monitor a woman's health during this recovery time – especially if she experienced complications during pregnancy or childbirth – as nearly half of maternal deaths occur during the first days and weeks after childbirth. The most common preventable causes of severe maternal morbidity and maternal mortality include obstetric hemorrhage, severe hypertension, venous thromboembolism, infection and cardiac disease. Postpartum depression can also be a significant threat to both maternal and newborn health. Even healthy women who give birth are at risk for these complications.

The Postpartum Discharge Education Program is an outgrowth of AWHONN's **Empowering Women to Obtain Needed Care** project, an 18-month quality improvement project which focused on developing clear, concise, and consistent messages about post-birth warning signs for complications, as well as when and how women should obtain care. The project also emphasized the importance of working collaboratively with postpartum mother-baby nurses to deliver these messages to all postpartum women prior to discharge. Increasing the number of women who recognize potential life-threatening post-birth warning signs that can occur after hospital discharge and educating them on when to obtain immediate medical attention can save lives.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS

Has AWHONN developed materials for nurses or patients related to this program?

AWHONN has developed key documents for this program:

- For nurses: The POST-BIRTH Warning Signs Checklist standardizes the messages to be taught to each and every postpartum woman, regardless of risk.
- For postpartum women: An accompanying handout, Save Your Life, available in both English and Spanish, is meant to be distributed to women to reinforce the teaching and take home.
- Magnets and/or magnet templates are available for purchase to assist in educating postpartum women.

What is the reading level of the Save Your Life handout for postpartum women and their families?

The Save Your Life handout was developed for a 6-8th grade reading level.

Can we use these materials to create other products or resources in our facilities?

The content of the post-birth educational materials and teaching tools are AWHONN's proprietary resources.

Healthcare providers may use the AWHONN **Save your Life Post-Birth Warning Signs (1) page Handout for free and for unlimited print copies for patient education, discharge education and internal hospital/clinic use only.**

For all other uses of the above and all other resources in the education, the following terms apply:

Purchase of 1-9 online education seats provides:

- Permission for a hospital to print 1-9 copies of resources for use in the clinical setting. The number of tools that can be printed equals the number of seats purchased.
- Permission for resources to be integrated into a hospital's policy and procedure resource in print or online format.

Note: Resources may not be shared electronically other than as an addition to hospital policy. Permissions to disseminate/reprint AWHONN materials must be approved by AWHONN. Any hospital having purchased less than 10 seats may send requests to permissions@awhonn.org where requests will be considered case by case and may incur additional fees.

Purchase of 10 or more online education seats or membership in Implementation Communities provides:

- Permission for one hospital to integrate the resources into the electronic medical record or an App.
- Permission for a hospital to reproduce and distribute up to 1,000 print copies of the tools for use in the clinical setting. The resources can only be distributed to the care team within that hospital. Resources can be printed and/or distributed via the hospital intranet.
- Permission for tools to be integrated into a hospital's policy and procedure resource.

Note: Permissions to disseminate or reproduce materials for any other purpose must be approved by AWHONN. Requests must be sent to permissions@awhonn.org.

AHWONN has also developed magnets and a magnet template for the Save your Life Flyer. You can view and purchase these on the AWHONN store at www.awhonn.org/pde

How do we obtain these materials from AWHONN? Is there a fee?

If you participate in AWHONN's Postpartum Discharge Education (PDE) Implementation Community, you gain access to both the nursing checklist and the patient handout for your hospital site, as well as permission to integrate the nursing checklist with essential teaching points into your facility's EMR. If you complete AWHONN's online educational course, "POST-BIRTH Warning Signs: The Nurse's Role in Preventing Maternal Morbidity and Mortality", you receive both of these documents as part of the course. See the above permissions policy for how then can be used. Special permissions may incur a fee depending on numbers of users and venue/format you want or need.

Can we integrate the POST-BIRTH Warning Signs Checklist for nurses into our electronic medical record (EMR) at this time?

A purchase of 10 or more online education seats or membership in Implementation Communities provides:

- Permission for one hospital to integrate the resources into the electronic medical record or an App.

- Permission for a hospital to reproduce and distribute up to 1,000 print copies of the tools for use in the clinical setting. The resources can only be distributed to the care team within that hospital. Resources can be printed and/or distributed via the hospital intranet.
- Permission for tools to be integrated into a hospital's policy and procedure resource.

ONLINE EDUCATION

What can you tell me about the postpartum discharge education online course?

AWHONN has developed a standard approach to postpartum discharge education provided by nurses during the mother's hospital stay. This approach is described in detail in AWHONN's online course, "POST-BIRTH Warning Signs: The Nurse's Role in Preventing Maternal Morbidity and Mortality". This course educates postpartum nurses about the rising rates of maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity in the U.S., particularly during the postpartum period, and the essential role nurses can play in reversing this trend. The purpose of the educational offering is to:

- Heighten nurses' awareness of the post-birth warning signs that significantly contribute to maternal morbidity and mortality in the postpartum period.
- Enable nurses to incorporate the Post-Birth Warning Signs teaching into postpartum discharge education for ALL women.

The course introduces AWHONN's POST-BIRTH Warning Signs Checklist for nurses, which includes essential teaching about warning signs that can signal serious complications. A handout for women and their families, available in both English and Spanish, accompanies this activity to reinforce the warning signs, and when and how to obtain medical attention.

Is there a fee to take this course?

Yes, you can purchase the course individually or hospitals can purchase a bundle of seats for their staff nurses to take the course. Continuing Nursing Education (CNE) contact hours will be awarded for successful completion of the course.

What are the benefits of taking the educational course online?

AWHONN developed this online course after conducting a yearlong quality improvement project, which included a survey of postpartum nurses nationwide. We found there was a gap in knowledge about the rising rates of maternal morbidity and mortality, particularly for women in the postpartum period. When nurses are well informed about the problem and what specific post-birth warning signs may indicate potential postpartum complications, they are more likely to focus their discharge education consistently on teaching all postpartum women how to recognize and respond to get necessary medical attention. This is an important contribution to quality of care and reversing this devastating trend.

When will this course be available on AWHONN's Online Learning Center?

Update 11/15/2017

AWHONN's most recent addition to the Online Learning Center, "POST-BIRTH Warning Signs: The Nurse's Role in Preventing Maternal Morbidity and Mortality" is now available. Contact learning@awhonn.org for more information.