

Advancing severe maternal morbidity data collection in Massachusetts

The Betsy Lehman Center for Patient Safety is leading an effort to bring timely severe maternal morbidity (SMM) data to maternal health providers in the Commonwealth, so they can identify cases in a timely manner for quality improvement.

THE PROBLEM: ANALYSIS OF HOSPITAL DISCHARGE DATA IS TOO DELAYED FOR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

Currently, hospitals submit discharge data to the Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA) quarterly. The data is then released to the Betsy Lehman Center annually to analyze and create reports for hospitals with SMM data by race and ethnicity. This one-year lag means that clinical teams are unable to act in real-time or close to real-time to address SMM. Despite efforts to improve, state SMM rates continue to rise.

THE SOLUTION: MONTHLY DATA SUBMISSIONS IMPROVE PROCESSES AND ANALYSES BY STATE PARTNERS

CHIA has committed to receiving discharge records from interested hospitals through the submission portal every month, and making data immediately accessible to Betsy Lehman Center staff through a secure database.

For hospitals participating in the pilot, the Center's staff identify SMM cases and share the data with provider teams within six to eight weeks. Hospital clinical teams are then asked to confirm the cases, and the Betsy Lehman Center uploads final reports to a secure website where hospitals can log in and track their SMM rates. By submitting discharge data monthly instead of quarterly, hospitals participating in the pilot are able to see SMM data *within just a few weeks of the event*.

THE RESULTS: TIMELY QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND BETTER COMMUNICATION BETWEEN TEAMS

Data submitters at participating hospitals deem this to be a small lift, since it relies on existing processes. It has improved communication between clinicians and coding teams and allowed providers to practice timely quality improvement. The Betsy Lehman Center continues to work to improve its analysis and reporting through this process, to better support birthing hospitals in Massachusetts.

JOINING THE PILOT

This process does not require an updated MOU between the Betsy Lehman Center and each hospital because of the regular discharge information that CHIA collects per the CM regs (957 CMR 8).

There is no change to the data submission process for hospitals except that it happens monthly instead of quarterly.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Reach out to the Betsy Lehman Center if you are interested in joining the pilot. Please contact:

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The Center will coordinate a meeting with provider teams, data submitters and CHIA to discuss the process, and hospitals may begin submitting data monthly whenever they are ready.

