

Providing Safe Care and Improving Outcomes

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Issue

Nemaha Valley Community Hospital is a 25 bed critical access hospital located in north eastern Kansas 11 miles from the Nebraska border. We have a small population of Amish families in our service area that were choosing home births with a Certified Professional Midwife that was based close to 100 miles away. The patients would come to our Emergency Room when emergencies would arise. We were concerned after some bad outcomes that we felt could have been prevented. Their community is approximately 30 miles from our facility near the Nebraska border.



Project

All patients want a safe and healthy delivery. Our medical staff met to discuss ways to provide safe care to these patients and improve the outcomes. One of our medical providers and social worker went to their community to visit with the church elders. The provider discussed the goal of providing safe care to these patients as well as what was needed to provide basic safe care with deliveries at our hospital. The social worker gave them information on programs available to them to help pay for care.

- Identify and educate on basic care: sonogram, initial labs, and prenatal visit
- Educate on the importance of appointments in the 3rd trimester to recognize problems.
- Educate on safe care and how it prevents emergent care and transfers. This in turn keeps costs lower.
- Charity Care programs: who to talk to about this and how this program works.
- Babies Best Start Program: this program provides families with basic baby items including a car seat and a care package to help families get started (Diapers, wipes, thermometer, blankets, clothing etc.).

Results

We have delivered 24 babies to Amish families since we have begun to work with them. Another 7 patients were transferred for pregnancy complications.

- We are no longer seeing patients coming to the ER without receiving any prenatal care.
- All received prenatal care sometimes not until the 2nd trimester.
- High-risk problems were identified & dealt with in a timely manner.
- All that delivered in our facility have received car seats and car seat training.
- Many families have had multiple babies since the project began.
- The community has spoken to other Amish communities near us, and we have begun to see other Amish families in the area as well.
- Have begun to work with the Nebraska Perinatal Care Collaborative to coordinate services/get early interventions when appropriate.



- Postpartum follow-up care with a lactation consultant has been offered and well received since it is a free service. This is the perfect opportunity to provide some education on routine healthcare.
- As we have begun to see these moms more frequently, we have recognized some chronic hypertension and other chronic conditions that we can educate patients on and begin treatment.
- We have begun to see Amish moms interested in/attending Prenatal classes/Childbirth Education classes.
- They receive a mental health screening as part of routine care. This group of patients is hesitant to receive help in this area thus far. We are hoping that the more they hear about mental health, the more open they will be to receiving care.

Lessons Learned

- Follow up care is also important. We have problems with patients coming to postpartum appointments. They have become more open to lactation consultant visits postpartum, but do not always follow up with the provider.
- Initially we tried to offer car seats through the Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office and found that because they come through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration office that this program could not be utilized because they have no health insurance. We opted to add car seats to our Babies Best Start program to help meet this need.

Organization Information

Nemaha Valley Community Hospital is a 25 bed Critical Access Hospital located in Seneca, Kansas a small community in Nemaha County in Northeast Kansas. We have approximately 55 deliveries per year.

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