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Information current as of April 10, 2020

Dear Medication-Assisted Treatment Providers,

If you have patients that are expected to deliver a baby in the next several months, please start talking to them by at least 32 weeks (8 months), and then weekly, about what to expect at the hospital with COVID-19 restrictions.

First, providers should be screening all patient for COVID 19 symptoms. Currently, pregnant women are not in Tier 1 of the Maine CDC testing criteria. They would be in Tier 1 if they are hospitalized or are living in congregate setting (e.g., LTCFs, group homes, assisted living facilities, jails, shelters). Testing criteria is subject to change. If you suspect a pregnant woman has COVID 19, please contact their maternity provider to coordinate care.

Before delivery, families should identify a primary care provider for the newborn and contact the office with the information that they are planning to deliver soon. Your office can also work with the mom to make a referral to Public Health Nursing, Maine Families Home Visiting, and WIC, to provide support before and after delivery through the Cradle ME referral system at 1-888-644-1130.

While policies are being updated almost daily, at most hospitals, moms will likely not be allowed to leave the hospital once she has been admitted for labor and until the baby is discharged. Moms should plan to bring with them their medication for substance use disorder treatment that would last for 7-14 days. Additionally, moms should be prepared that most hospitals will allow only one support person during the mom's inpatient stay. Once mom is discharged and the infant is the patient, only one caregiver can be with the infant during the hospital stay.

Additionally, please talk with the mom about who will be her support person at the hospital. If the support person is in a treatment program, they should also bring 2-3 days of their medication-assisted treatment with them, as most hospitals are not letting support people leave the facility and return.

Currently, most Maine hospitals continue to monitor newborns whose moms are receiving treatment for substance use disorder for at least five (5) days after delivery for signs of withdrawal and to ensure that they can eat, sleep, and be consoled.

After delivery, follow-up should be arranged with the newborn's primary care providers, in addition to having the mom make follow-up appointments with your office. Public Health Nurses are also available to do in person and telephone visits with families to provide close follow-up support.

As many SUD treatment providers are now seeing patients virtually and not in the office, it would also be helpful for you to reach out to the hospital and/or OB provider so that they know how to best reach you should your patient require a prescription while they are boarding at the hospital or after the infant is discharged.

Good communication between providers is essential and we thank you for all you are doing to support women and families during this unprecedented time.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Belisle".

Amy Belisle, MD, MBA

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