To: Mayor and Members
Board of Health

From: Elizabeth Richardson
Medical Officer of Health

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Re: Launch of new Postpartum Assessment Clinic (BOH07011) (City Wide)

Council Direction: Not Applicable

Information:

Healthy Babies, Healthy Children (HBHC) Program - Postpartum Component

The HBHC Postpartum Program (100% funded through the Ministry of Children and Youth Services) seeks to achieve a continuum of care from the hospital to the community for all mothers and newborns. This goal is achieved by providing all families with support and access to services immediately following the birth of a child. Hospitals are to provide mothers with the option of staying in hospital for up to 60 hours following a normal birth and to refer all mothers (with their consent) to public health. This includes completion of the Parkyn screening tool to assess level of risk. Public Health is to provide all consenting mothers with a telephone call within 48 hours of their day of discharge and, if requested by the mother, a public health nurse (PHN) home visit. When discharge occurs before 48 hours after birth, current policy guidelines recommend that the mother and newborn be assessed by a health professional within 48 hours post-discharge. For discharge > 48 hours after birth, follow-up assessment is recommended within seven days of discharge for newborns, and within six weeks for mothers.

The Family Health Division of Public Health Services has been collaborating with local physicians and hospitals over the last nine months to develop a new model for delivering the postpartum component of the HBHC Program. The collaborative team recognized the need to adapt the current model as the desired number of new families are not being reached. This new model will offer the traditional 48 hour postpartum assessment in a clinic setting, provided by a PHN in hospital. By closely collaborating with community physicians, the model will ensure that families are seen by a health professional at least twice within the first seven days. A clinic will be offered at both Hamilton Health Sciences (McMaster site) and St. Joseph’s Health Care. Clinics will be
open daily 8:30-4:30 (including weekends) and staffed by PHN(s). The content of the clinic appointment will be the same as the current telephone assessment, but will have the added benefit of face-to-face assessment. This model has many benefits for our community, as outlined below, and is being provided within existing funding.

**Postpartum Assessment Clinic (PPAC) Goals:**

- To ensure seamless transition for postpartum families from hospital to community
- To ensure effective communication between hospital, physician(s), and Public Health Services in order to provide timely and comprehensive healthcare for mothers and newborns in the early weeks of life
- To enhance and support the continuum of care provide by physicians, hospital, public health, and other health care providers
- To increase the number of families receiving early postpartum contact and a postpartum home visit from the HBHC Program in our community
- To reduce the incidence of early breastfeeding cessation

**Media Launch**

Postpartum Assessment Clinics will begin providing service Monday March 26, 2007. A media launch is planned for March 23. Councillor Duvall will be attending on behalf of Mayor Eisenberger. Drs. Peter Steer (President, McMaster Children's Hospital), Kevin Smith (CEO and President St. Joseph's Health Care) and Mathew Hodge are also confirmed to attend. We have invited the Honourable Marie Bountrogianni, MPP Hamilton Mountain and the Honourable Mary Anne Chambers, Minister Children and Youth Services to attend this event.

**Summary**

The PPAC model has many benefits for new families in the City Of Hamilton in that it:

- Utilizes a universal approach, offering service to all new mothers and newborns
- Will provide a comprehensive postpartum assessment (mothers and newborns are seen twice in the first seven days postpartum)
- Will increase the number of women receiving home visits and ensure early identification of issues (e.g. post partum depression)
- Will increase the accuracy of the brief assessment/intervention due to a face-to-face clinic visit
- Facilitates a consistent approach to care which is coordinated, efficient, and evidence-based
- Will improve access to care through the provision of weekend clinics
- Fulfils professional and ministry policy guidelines

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Medical Officer of Health
Public Health Services