

Neonatal Transfer Guideline from Planned Community Birth
Pullman Regional Hospital

Pullman Regional Hospital welcomes patients who are transferred from a planned community birth. We work with the local community midwives needing our services to provide a smooth transfer of care in order to optimize outcomes and experiences for our shared patients. The hospital team recognizes that the hospital is not the patient's preferred site for delivery, postpartum, or neonatal care. Our staff will strive to acknowledge this and convey our understanding directly to the patient, while providing them with high quality and compassionate care.

Procedures for communication around EMERGENT transfer of care of a neonate:

Possible transfer criteria: any infant receiving active resuscitation or with respiratory distress, abnormal vital signs, abnormal neurologic exam, concern for sepsis, severe hypoglycemia, etc.

1. If **emergent**, community midwife calls **911**; if able, the midwife (or member of the birth team) will call the Pullman Regional Hospital **ED** to alert them of pending arrival: **509-332-2541**; ask to speak to the ED and give a short report.
2. Community midwives with approval from the patient may accompany and remain with the patient in designated clinical areas, in accordance with hospital policies and safety guidelines. Collaboration with the midwife and primary RN is recommended to maintain patient safety.
3. Records should be faxed to PRH (**ED fax: 509-336-7353**) and/or brought in-hand.
4. ED staff will notify Labor and Delivery Charge Nurse for additional nursing support in ED, if needed.
5. ED staff will notify Pediatrician on-call of impending arrival of newborn, if needed.

Procedures upon arrival at Pullman Regional Hospital:

- The hospital team recognizes that the community midwife has an established relationship with the patient.
 - Ideally, and when possible, a bedside huddle will occur with the community midwife, parent(s) and their support team, nursing and receiving provider (if present) for introductions and shared decision-making for care plan.
- The community midwife may stay to provide ongoing support of the patient and family; if they depart, it is encouraged to provide a good contact number in case the hospital provider(s)/staff have any questions or concerns. (see *Community Midwife Directory* for contact info)

Procedures for communication around URGENT/NON-EMERGENT transfer of care of a neonate/newborn:

Possible transfer criteria: any infant with concerns for hyperbilirubinemia requiring phototherapy, non-emergent anatomic defects, abnormal newborn metabolic screen result, etc.

1. During office hours (Mon-Thu: 8am – 8pm; Fri: 8am-5pm; Sat: 9am-1pm), community midwife calls Palouse Pediatrics at **509-332-2605** and asks to speak to the on-call pediatrician to determine if ED or clinic evaluation is necessary.
2. If outside of business hours, newborn will need to be seen in the ED for urgent evaluation. Call **509-332-2541**, ask to speak to the ED, identify yourself as a community midwife provider to notify them of patient's arrival and a short report if possible.
3. PRH does not offer direct admissions to the nursery.
4. Community midwife will fax pertinent records to where infant will be seen **ED fax: 509 336-7353**
5. Palouse Peds (Pullman) fax: **509-715-2123**
 - a. When providing records, please include: newborn exam record, maternal labs and US reports

Procedures for discharge:

1. A request through Medical Records can be made to obtain hospital records; the community midwife should be designated as a provider and should receive records in a timely manner.
2. The community midwife's client/patient may also access *MyChart* to share information with their midwife.
3. The hospital care providers (i.e., OB, pediatric provider) will contact the community midwife to give a report and coordinate follow-up care for the patient and/or the newborn. (See *Community Midwife Directory* for contact information if not already provided by the transferring provider).

*At the end of this guideline, please reference resources containing information and education regarding community midwives in WA State, their scope of practice, training, and guidance provided by midwifery professional associations.

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Everyone's feedback is encouraged through the Smooth Transitions® surveys and data collection tools. There are surveys for the **receiving provider, nursing, community midwife, client, doula, and EMS providers**. The data from these surveys are de-identified, aggregated into a report and reviewed quarterly. See posters for QR code or visit the Smooth Transitions® website: <https://www.qualityhealth.org/smoothtransitions/surveys-2/>

If the transfer of care to Pullman Regional Hospital fell below expectations, we ask that follow-up be provided with the appropriate contacts so that direct, immediate feedback may be shared with respective care teams.

### **Please direct feedback to:**

- Pediatrics Smooth Transitions Champion: Dr. Shields **509-332-2605**
- Nurse Manager-in-training: Hannah Hartz **(509) 336-7630**
- ED Physician Champion: Dr. Mikelsen **509-336-7370**

- Community Midwife Liaison: ViviAnne Fischer: **509-338-5326**
- Smooth Transitions Program Manager: **425-870-5044** [sdavidson@qualityhealth.org](mailto:sdavidson@qualityhealth.org)

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Community Midwives – prepping clients for neonate/newborn transfer to Pullman Regional Hospital:

- PRH is a level 1 nursery; newborns may be transferred via Life Flight if a higher level of care is necessary. The following criteria will require transfer to higher level of care:
 - <35 wks gestational age
 - <1500g birth weight
 - CPAP or higher level respiratory support beyond initial resuscitation
- Newborns are required to stay for at least 24 hours after delivery; if parents decide to leave prior to 24 hours, they must sign a form indicating that this decision is against medical advice and it may affect insurance coverage of their hospital stay.

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**Below are resources containing information and education regarding community midwives in WA State, their scope of practice, training, and guidance provided by midwifery professional associations.**

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Washington Licensed Midwives (ed 4/22/25)

Scope of Practice

WA Licensed Midwives (LMs) are regulated by the Washington State Department of Health. They are licensed to provide prenatal, intrapartum, postpartum and newborn care and are tasked with consulting with a physician whenever there are significant deviations from normal in either the parent or the newborn per [RCW 18.50.010](#). Midwives who practice in birth centers have additional restrictions based on requirements of licensed birth centers in [RCW 18.46](#). Licensed birth center only deliver singleton cephalic term babies. Elements of newborn care can be found in [WAC 246-834-255](#)

[RCW 18.50.108](#) requires LMs to develop a written plan for consultation with other health care providers, emergency transfer, transport of an infant to a newborn nursery or neonatal intensive care nursery, and transport of an individual to an appropriate obstetrical department or patient care area. The written plan must be submitted annually together with the license renewal fee to the Department of Health.

[RCW 18.50.115](#) allows for LMs to obtain three separate license extensions that can be used to increase their scope of care. With these extensions, midwives can prescribe medications for the prevention or treatment of common perinatal conditions, insert and remove IUDs, and insert and remove implantable contraception.

Training Requirements

WA LMs are required by [RCW 18.50.040](#) to train for at least three years and include both didactic work and clinical rotations. Didactic work includes the study of: obstetrics; neonatal pediatrics; basic sciences; female reproductive anatomy and physiology; behavioral sciences; childbirth education; community care; obstetrical pharmacology; epidemiology; gynecology; family planning; genetics; embryology; neonatology; the medical and legal aspects of midwifery; nutrition during pregnancy and lactation; breastfeeding and nursing skills (including injections, IV administration, catheterization, and aseptic technique). Clinical requires at least two sites that are focused on birth center or home birth where students learn all aspects of care and they must have participated in at least 100 deliveries before being eligible for Washington licensing.

Bastyr University Department of Midwifery offers a Masters of Science in Midwifery degree. More than half of the LMs in WA have graduated from this program since 2010 or from its predecessor, the Seattle Midwifery School, founded in 1978. The remaining LMs in the state have completed their education through one of several accredited distance learning programs, including the Midwives College of Utah and the National College of Midwifery. A majority of the LMs in WA, having completed the North American Registry of Midwives exam, also hold the national credential of Certified Professional Midwife (CPM).

Legend Drugs and Devices

According to [WAC 246-834-250](#) licensed midwives can:

- Draw blood and collect appropriate samples for lab testing (for example routine bloodwork, paps, bilirubin, newborn screening samples)
- Administer appropriate vaccinations during pregnancy and in the newborn period.
- Administer Rho(D) immune globulin as appropriate
- Administer IVs (for hydration, antibiotics during labor, and hemorrhage treatment).
- Perform limited OB ultrasound and refer out to radiology or MFM for more detailed ultrasounds. They can perform NSTs.
- Suture routine lacerations after delivery (including appropriate anesthetics)
- Monitor fetuses using NSTs in the antepartum period (though they do not provide continuous fetal monitoring during labor)
- Perform urinary catheterization
- Utilize drugs and devices to manage hemorrhage (for example: antihemorrhagics like pitocin, misoprostol and methergine, TXA, jada)

- Perform neonatal resuscitation including using of oxygen, masks, pulse ox, LMAs, and cpap, and UVC or IO epinephrine
- Prescribe glucometers for managing blood sugar during pregnancy, and do asses glucose values in the gestational parent or newborn
- Administer nitrous oxide for analgesia during labor and other procedures
- Prescribe and administer multiple types of birth control (including hormonal and non-hormonal, IUDs, and implants)
- Perform hearing screens on infants
- Prescribe medications for common perinatal conditions (for example: anti-emetics, antibiotics, antifungals, stool softeners, prenatal vitamins, hormonal and non-hormonal birth control, and others)

Routine Care Provided by Licensed Midwives to in the Prenatal Period

- 7-15 prenatal visits throughout pregnancy
- Initial history taking, physical exam, and discussion of all screening tests offered for both gestational parent and fetal health
- Screening and diagnostic bloodwork, as appropriate
- Vaccinations and Rho(D) immune globulin, as appropriate
- Ultrasounds and NSTs as appropriate, done onsite or through referral
- Medications prescribed as necessary for common perinatal conditions, avoiding additional unnecessary visits to a primary care doctor
- Continual assessment of appropriateness of community birth or referral for in-hospital delivery

Routine Care Provided by Licensed Midwives during Labor

- Labor and delivery care for babies at term. Licensed midwives can deliver breech and twins, but birth center based practices do not
- Can provide GBS prophylaxis, IV fluids PRN
- Intermittent fetal monitoring (shown to be adequate for low-risk pregnancies)
- Nitrous oxide for pain relief
- No pharmacologic induction of labor or augmentation
- No epidurals
- No forceps or vacuum deliveries
- Facilitation to hospital care when necessary (for example: prolonged labor, patient request for pain relief, postpartum hemorrhage, need for care not available in the community – like augmentation, surgery, forceps, or vacuum). This includes providing necessary records, giving report to the receiving provider, and coming to the hospital for a handoff.

Routine Care Provided by Licensed Midwives to Gestational Parents and Newborns ([WAC 246-834-255](#)) in the 24 Hour Postpartum Period

- Active management

- Initial postpartum hemorrhage management (transfer to hospital if appropriate)
- Initial newborn resuscitation (transfer to hospital if appropriate)
- IV fluids PRN
- Suturing of 1st and 2nd degree lacerations
- Lactation support
- Full newborn exam with tongue tie assessment
- Newborn procedures can include vitamin K, erythromycin, hepatitis B vaccine, glucose levels, pulse oximetry, blood typing, hearing screen
- Discharge at 3-5 hours post delivery with planned in-home follow up the next day
- Home visit with newborn metabolic screen, CCHD, weight check and jaundice/bilirubin screen for baby
- Home visit with physical exam, lactation assistance, and Rho(D) immunoglobulin administration as appropriate

Routine Care Provided by Licensed Midwives to Gestational Parents and Newborns in the Postpartum

- Two weeks of care for newborn patients, including lactation help, weight checks, 2nd metabolic screen, jaundice/bilirubin screening, and referral to a pediatrician for ongoing care
- Six weeks of care for parent, lactation support, screening for postpartum mood disorders, cervical cancer screening, family planning counseling, and referral for ongoing care
- Referral to the hospital for complications including postpartum pre-eclampsia, jaundice requiring treatment, or other conditions requiring a higher level of care.
- The HCA has defined the “postpartum period” as twelve months after delivery, so some midwives may continue seeing the gestational parent for normal postpartum care. This may include blood draws to check on recovery from childbirth, BP checks to assess for normotensive status, family planning services, and continuing screening for postpartum mood disorders.

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### **Midwives’ Association of Washington State (MAWS): MAWS Indications for Discussion, Consultation, and Transfer of Care In a Community Based Midwifery Practice**

### **Washington Alliance for Responsible Midwifery (WARM): Considerations for Care, Consultation and Referral**