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General Circular Number: 01-36/2024

Deputy Director General (NHSL)

Deputy Director General (MS I and II)

All Provincial Directors of Health Services

All Directors of National Hospitals (Kandy and Galle)

All Regional Directors of Health Services

All Directors of Teaching /Provincial/Specialized and District General Hospitals

All Medical Superintendents of Base Hospitals and all MOICs of the hospitals

Mandatory Implementation of the National Partogram in Labour Rooms Across All Healthcare Institutions in Sri Lanka.

Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes the Partogram as the international gold standard for labour monitoring, particularly in preventing life-threatening complications such as obstructed labour. While endorsed globally for its simplicity and effectiveness, the implementation and correct utilization of the Partogram in resource-limited settings, including Sri Lanka, remain to be improved despite substantial investments in training and capacity building.

Correct and consistent application of the National Partogram, especially with updated technological solutions, is imperative for reducing maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity. It allows real-time detection of abnormalities in labour progression and maternal and foetal conditions, facilitating timely interventions.

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Reference is made to the National Guideline for Maternal Care (2013), prepared by the Sri Lanka College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the Director General of Health Services (DGHS) Circular HQSA/MOH/03/2016, dated 05.01.2017, which provides instructions on the implementation of clinical indicators across all major specialities, including obstetrics.

Recent maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity surveillance reports have consistently shown that preventable maternal and neonatal deaths, as well as complications, are often linked to delayed recognition, diagnosis, and treatment, as well as failures in escalating care during obstetric and neonatal emergencies.

In light of the aforementioned findings, the Ministry of Health hereby mandates the full and proper implementation of the National Partogram [H 1255] in all healthcare institutions conducting deliveries. This directive is issued to ensure early detection of maternal and foetal complications, thereby safeguarding the health and lives of mothers and newborns.

Obligations of Healthcare Providers:

Each consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, or in their absence, the heads of healthcare institutions, are hereby mandated to:

1. Ensure the comprehensive and effective implementation of the National Partogram in all delivery units/labour rooms under their purview.
2. Create a conducive environment for its proper use, ensuring that all relevant healthcare personnel receive adequate training and that systems are in place for providing continuous feedback and addressing challenges encountered in practice.
3. Conduct monthly clinical audits to evaluate the usage and effectiveness of the Partogram, which should be facilitated through the Quality Management Unit or any other appropriate designated body within the institution.

Supervision and Monitoring:

The Director General of Health Services, along with Provincial and Regional Directors of Health Services, are hereby instructed to oversee, supervise, and ensure compliance with this directive within their respective jurisdictions/areas.

Audit and Reporting Mechanism:

The Quality Secretariat of the Ministry of Health is mandated to compile summaries of the clinical audits and present the findings at every Hospital Directors' meeting conducted by Ministry of Health. These summaries will be submitted under the direct supervision of the Director General of Health Services to monitor compliance and identify areas for improvement.

Enforcement and Compliance:

This directive shall come into immediate effect, and all relevant institutions are expected to comply without delay. Any instance of non-compliance or violation of this mandate will result in administrative or disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by the Ministry of Health in accordance with applicable regulations, and internal policies. Compliance will be strictly monitored, and institutions found in breach will be subject to further investigation as consider necessary by the Ministry.

The Ministry of Health reiterates the critical importance of this directive in improving maternal and neonatal outcomes across all delivery units. All healthcare providers are required to take the necessary steps to ensure full compliance.



Dr Palitha G Mahipala

Secretary,

Ministry of Health

Dr. P. G. Mahipala

Secretary

Ministry of Health

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CC:

1. Director General of Health Services- f.i, oversee, and ensure compliance.
2. Deputy Director General (PHS I and II)- f.i
3. Deputy Director General (Investigations)-f.i
4. Director, Patient safety and Quality- f.i & n.a
5. President, Sri Lanka College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists- f.i & n.a
6. Chief Legal Officer- f.i