

WELSH HEALTH CIRCULAR



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Issue Date: 9 April 2019

STATUS: COMPLIANCE

CATEGORY: STANDARDS

Title: Implementation of OBS Cymru (Obstetric Bleeding Strategy for Wales), a management strategy for Postpartum Haemorrhage (PPH), in Maternity Services

Date of Review: April 2024

For Action by:

Chief Executives Health Boards
Directors of Nursing Health Boards
Medical Directors Health Boards
Heads of Midwifery Health Boards
Clinical Directors (Maternity)

Action required by:

That this strategy is embedded into routine practice in PPH management.

Sender: Professor Jean White – Chief Nursing Officer

HSSG Welsh Government Contact(s) :

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Enclosure(s): current OBS Cymru paperwork V9.7, current ROTEM protocol V6.1.



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Dear Colleagues

I am writing to ask that you ensure that the OBS Cymru approach to postpartum haemorrhage management continues to be embedded into routine practice following project cessation on 31 March 2019. I ask that you ensure that these standards continue to be adhered to across all maternity services.

Background

In response to concerns raised by the Welsh maternity services community in conjunction with research undertaken in Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, an All Wales collaborative quality improvement project aiming to reduce harm from postpartum haemorrhage by improving and standardising management commenced in November 2016. This Welsh Government funded project involved change in practice through:

- Training on bundle implementation including measuring blood loss after all births, and use of a bedside clotting test (visco-elastometric haemostatic assay (VHA))
- OBS Cymru bundle
 1. Risk assessment for postpartum haemorrhage for all mothers in labour.
 2. Cumulative objective measurement of blood loss from birth so that excessive bleeding is recognised early and consistently
 3. Standardised paperwork and closed loop communication to facilitate timely and consistent escalation to the multidisciplinary team
 4. Early VHA, haemoglobin and lactate testing performed at the bedside providing results within 10 minutes so that treatment can guide maternal resuscitation
- Data collection and unit level feedback

The project implementation phase has now completed, with changes in practice embedded into routine care and training including through PROMPT Wales. Outcomes for mothers have improved with a reduction in red blood cell transfusions, incidence of large postpartum haemorrhage and critical care admissions.

Engagement

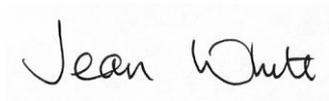
This project was developed in collaboration with the Wales Maternity Network, 1000 Lives Improvement, Wales Deanery and all seven health boards. There has been wide engagement from the Heads of Midwifery, Women's Health National Specialist Advisory Group (NSAG), Royal College of Midwives, Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Point of Care testing teams, Haematology, Anaesthesia, Undergraduate Midwifery and all healthcare professionals involved in management of postpartum haemorrhage.

Monitoring and evaluation of standards

Health boards will be expected to continue to support full implementation including the bedside test technology, standardised paperwork and data collection with unit level feedback to inform the sustainability of change.

I would like to thank all of the maternity teams for their uptake and enthusiastic involvement in this project, which is improving outcomes for mothers in Wales.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jean White". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a light grey rectangular background.

**Professor Jean White CBE
Chief Nursing Officer
Nurse Director NHS Wales**