



New York State Perinatal Regionalization and Redesignation Project

IPRO delivers a complete solution to help NYS update its perinatal center regulations.



The Challenge

The United States has the highest maternal mortality rate among high-income nations. The non-Hispanic, Black population is two to four times more likely to experience maternal mortality than the non-Hispanic, White population. In New York State (NYS), non-Hispanic Black women have a five times higher rate of maternal mortality compared to non-Hispanic White women.

All birthing facilities in NYS have a designated level of care which is based upon the clinical profiles of patients treated, types of sub-specialty consultation available, qualifications of staff, types of equipment available, and volume of high-risk patients seen.

According to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, “The goal of levels of maternal care is to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality, including existing disparities, by encouraging the growth and maturation of systems for the provision of risk-appropriate care specific to maternal health needs.”¹ As part of its overall approach to reducing perinatal mortality and morbidity, the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH) planned to update the state’s perinatal regulations, which dictate the requirements for each designated level of perinatal care and enhance regionalized networks of perinatal hospitals to ensure pregnant women have access to the appropriate level of care in a timely manner.

The Approach

Advances in health care standards and medical technology led the NYS Department of Health to contract with IPRO for assistance with reviewing and updating criteria for designating levels of perinatal care for all hospitals, and, for the first time, birthing centers in the state. IPRO also assisted with literature reviews to help develop performance measures and assessed the potential impact of any changes for perinatal hospitals and birthing centers.

IPRO

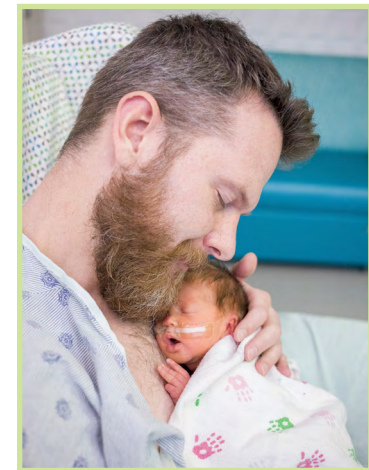
- Completed a systematic literature review to identify evidence-based changes in perinatal standard of care to update the perinatal regulations, such as:
 - The requirement of birthing facilities to have pre-arranged systems for alcohol and substance use therapy or opioid replacement therapy.
 - The requirement to have a trained and qualified international board-certified lactation consultant or certified lactation counselor available to educate and assist patients.
- Convened three in-person Expert Panel meetings and 19 virtual meetings of six subcommittees to provide recommendations and discuss proposed changes to the perinatal regulations.

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continued

The Approach (continued)

- Developed a Perinatal Matrix as a summary guide to capture all proposed and current regulations to act as a reference document for NYS DOH review teams assessing hospital designation levels and birthing facilities.
- Deployed five preliminary surveys, one for each level of perinatal care, to understand the potential impact of updated perinatal regulations on birthing facilities. Ninety-six percent of the state's birthing facilities responded to the survey. Based on the feedback received from the birthing facilities, the proposed regulations were further revised to address birthing facilities' concerns.



The Results

The NYS DOH published revised perinatal standards for public comment in May 2023 and received more than 100 comments from stakeholders. Finalization of the regulatory package is pending. Once the new regulations are adopted, facilities will be assessed as to their appropriate designation, based on the revised standards of care.

Conclusion

This project highlights IPRO's diverse skill set, methodical, evidence-based approach, as well as clinical and policy expertise in managing a complex assignment. From conducting literature reviews to researching perinatal regulations in other states, convening expert panels, working to reach consensus, surveying facilities and finally drafting proposed regulatory changes, the IPRO team delivered high-quality results, on time and on budget.



¹ American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, "Levels of Maternal Care," *Obstetric Consensus*, August 2019. Accessed at bit.ly/3WrQIFt