



Developing Protocols for

OBSTETRIC EMERGENCIES



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The emergency alarm goes off in Labor & Delivery (L&D) and every nurse within hearing distance runs to help. The patient's room quickly fills with staff members who are looking for ways to assist. Questions fly, tasks are completed and hopefully the emergency situation is resolved. But is this momentary chaos the best way to handle an obstetric (OB) emergency?

Abstract: There is potential for important steps to be missed in emergency situations, even in the presence of many health care team members. Developing a clear plan of response for common emergencies can ensure that no tasks are redundant or omitted, and can create a more controlled environment that promotes positive health outcomes. A multidisciplinary team was assembled in a large community hospital to create protocols that would help ensure optimum care and continuity of practice in cases of postpartum hemorrhage, shoulder dystocia, emergency cesarean surgical birth, eclamptic seizure and maternal code. Assignment of team roles and responsibilities led to the evolution of standardized protocols for each emergency situation. DOI: 10.1111/1751-486X.12146

Keywords: eclampsia | emergency cesarean | emergency protocol | maternal code | postpartum hemorrhage | shoulder dystocia

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