

Maternal Sepsis Awareness Patient Voice Sepsis Project

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite advancements in maternal care, maternal sepsis remains a leading cause of morbidity and mortality in obstetric populations. In the Labor and Delivery unit, there is a critical gap in patient education regarding the early signs, risks, and prevention strategies associated with maternal sepsis. This lack of awareness can delay recognition and treatment, leading to adverse outcomes for both mothers and newborns. A targeted Performance Improvement (PI) plan is essential to enhance patient understanding, empower timely reporting of symptoms, and ultimately improve clinical outcomes through proactive education and engagement.

SMART Goal

By March 2026, St. Clair Health will increase maternal sepsis awareness among postpartum patients by implementing a standardized patient education initiative. This will involve distributing educational materials, conducting bedside discussions, and incorporating a short maternal sepsis questionnaire into discharge processes. This goal ensures patient voices are prioritized, making education more interactive and effective.

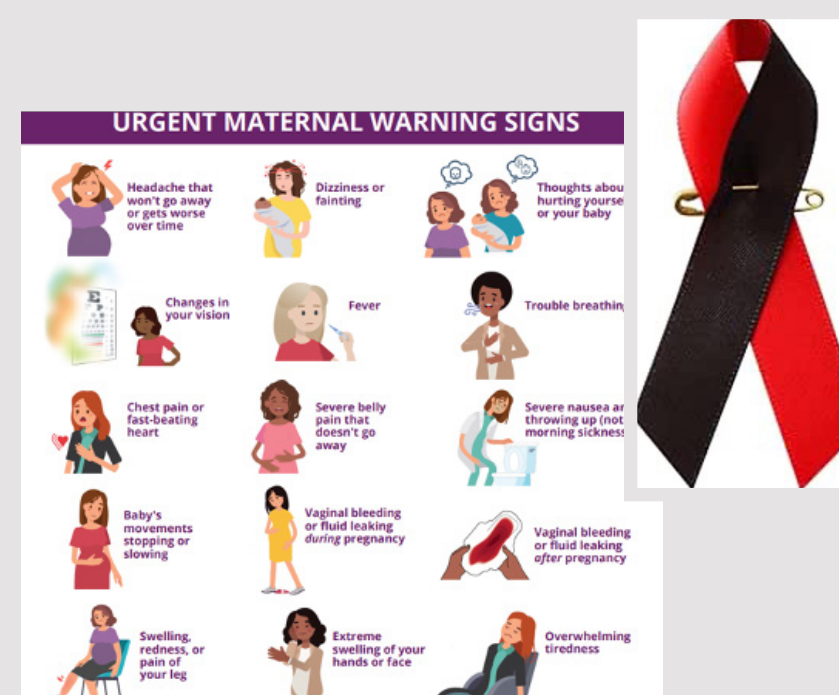
PLAN

- Create a unit wide education on project
- Choose educational materials for staff and patients
- Plan for best capture of patient voice—interview VS self reporting
- Engage the team in this unit wide project—find champions and helpers to lead the work



DO

- Maternal Sepsis Awareness Week Education—Used educational materials from Sepsis Alliance and passed out Sepsis awareness ribbons to all staff during daily huddles
- Sepsis Alliance education posted in ALL patient rooms
- Engaged Community Education Staff to utilize the ACOG Urgent Maternal Warning Signs Handout at community education classes
- Inpatient RNs using the AWHONN POST-BIRTH Warning Signs Magnet for patient education
- Patient Voice letter mailed to all discharged patients from August 2025 – current date



STUDY

- 36 patient voice responses to date
- Comments included liking the magnet, to no suggestions, to suggesting an easier discharge process



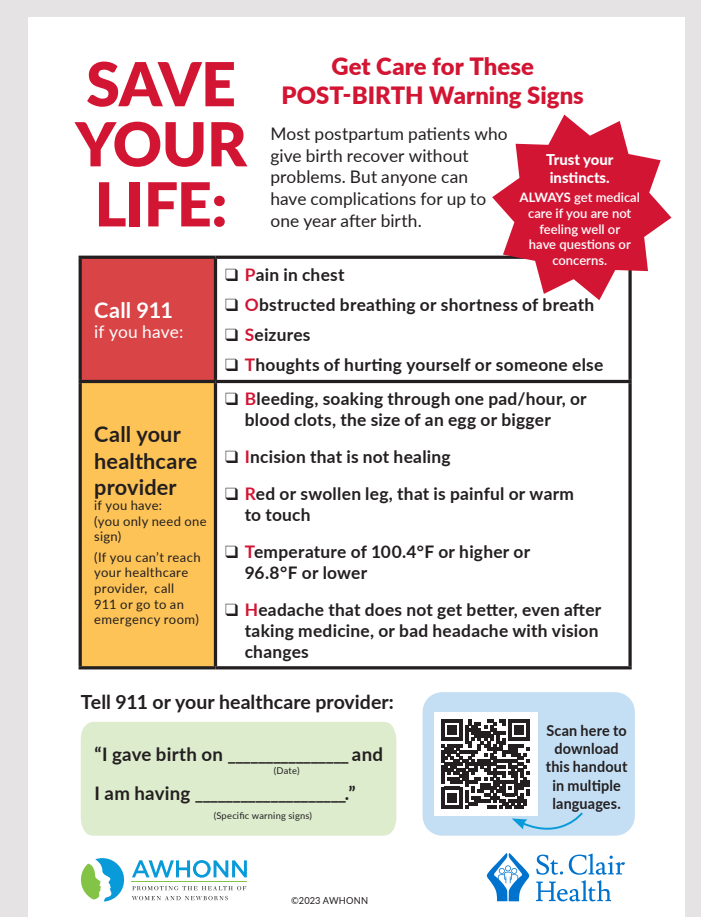
3. Is there anything more we can do to help you feel prepared and supported in monitoring your health at home?

25 Responses

ID #	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	I liked the magnet for my house
2	anonymous	No
3	anonymous	It would be helpful to have had this conversation prior to me being discharged. Should I make an earlier appointment to talk to my doctor more about this.
4	anonymous	Should I make an earlier doctors appointment for my recovery.
5	anonymous	No
6	anonymous	No
7	anonymous	No
8	anonymous	No
9	anonymous	No
10	anonymous	No
11	anonymous	No
12	anonymous	No
13	anonymous	No suggestions
14	anonymous	No suggestions
15	anonymous	No
16	anonymous	No
17	anonymous	Thank you
18	anonymous	No
19	anonymous	Thank you for reaching out! It would be helpful to understand how long we should be on the look out for symptoms.
20	anonymous	No thanks
21	anonymous	Nice handout
22	anonymous	Easier discharge - I had to wait what seemed like a long time to leave on discharge date
23	anonymous	No
24	anonymous	No
25	anonymous	This topic was not discussed

ACT

- Current data show the education we're using is effective
- Continue using the ACOG handout in community education classes to reinforce key messages
- Maintain the use of POST BIRTH Warning Signs education in the inpatient setting to support early recognition and response
- Keep surveying patients for feedback to better understand what resonates and to guide ongoing improvements in our education approach



SAVE YOUR LIFE! Get Care for These POST-BIRTH Warning Signs

Most postpartum patients who give birth recover without problems. But anyone can have complications for up to one year after birth.

Trust your instincts. ALWAYS get medical care if you are not feeling well or have persistent concerns.

Call 911 if you have:

- Pain in chest
- Obstructed breathing or shortness of breath
- Seizures
- Thoughts of hurting yourself or someone else

Call your healthcare provider if you have:

- Bleeding, soaking through one pad/hour, or blood clots, the size of an egg or bigger
- Incision that is not healing
- Red or swollen leg, that is painful or warm to touch
- Temperature of 100.4°F or higher or 96.8°F or lower
- Headache that does not get better, even after taking medicine, or bad headache with vision changes

Tell 911 or your healthcare provider:

"I gave birth on _____ and I am having _____"

Scan here to download this handout in multiple languages.

AWHONN
St. Clair Health