

Suggested questions and guidance for expectant parents from Bonnie Glass at the Massachusetts Perinatal Quality Collaborative:

What's important to you when choosing where to give birth?

1. The amount of support and care you will receive from a nurse during labor and birth, recover, breastfeeding and learning infant care.
2. Availability of pain management strategies during labor, conscious sedation medication, epidural analgesia, relaxation techniques, hydrotherapy, activity, etc.
3. Availability of Childbirth Education/Preparation classes, specific to that hospital's practices.
4. What is the ratio of deliveries to the number of Labor and Delivery rooms and Operating rooms?
5. Is there 24/7 OB anesthesiologist coverage in-house.

What should all hospitals have or add?

1. 24/7 telephone consultation line for prenatal, postpartum and newborn questions.
2. Mother/Baby accommodations in the same room, ie baby does not reside in a normal newborn nursery. Newborn feeding, examination, bathing, nursing care is conducted in the mother/baby room.

What do mothers need outside the hospital?

1. Breastfeeding support groups.
2. A nurse home visit to evaluate/monitor pregnancy risk conditions: gestational diabetes, pre-term labor, pre-eclampsia, etc.

What clinical quality measure do you want more information about?

1. C-section rate for hospital and for individual obstetrician sorted by 1) repeat and 2) First birth NTSV (nulliparous, term, singleton, vertex).
2. Medications: administration of antenatal steroids to prevent prematurity? Administration of opioid analgesics in labor? Administration of non-steroidal analgesics postpartum?
3. What percentage of newborns require readmission, office or ED visit in the first two weeks of life?
4. Breastfeeding rate at 3 months after delivery.
5. Early elective delivery (EED) rate by provider.
6. Incidence of maternal complications: hemorrhage, stroke, seizure, DVT, sepsis/wound infection, etc. (available from the MA DPH Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Committee)
7. Number of neonatal resuscitations performed

What quality information would help you compare doctors?

1. Incidence of forceps/vacuum use.
2. Are they present /available during the woman's labor?
3. Does the obstetrician or the hospital have a consultation/referral relationship with perinatal and neonatal experts and facilities, should there be complications during the pregnancy, labor, postpartum and immediate newborn period?