

Date: October 1, 2016

To: All North Zone Physicians
NZ Nurse Practitioners
NZ Primary Care Networks

From: North Zone Medical Officers of Health
Jordanna Lambert, Director, Population, Public and Indigenous Health

RE: Natural Umbilical Cord Care

This memo is to inform you of a practice change related to the removal of umbilical cord clamps in newborns seen within the Population, Public and Indigenous Health Healthy Beginnings Program, North Zone.

Staff in Population Public and Indigenous Health (Public Health Nursing) will leave the newborn umbilical cord clamp attached to the drying umbilical cord. The clamp will fall off naturally with the dried cord. This practice change will be implemented **October 1, 2016**.

Research indicates that there is no evidence to support leaving the clamps intact or removing them prior to the cord falling off. Current public health practice includes removing the clamp during the home visit or at parent's request.

A number of Canadian hospitals and health units have moved away from routine cord clamp removal, with no indication of issues. Benchmarking of these facilities demonstrated no untoward effects one to ten years after ending this practice.

This practice change has been endorsed by the Medical Officers of Health for North Zone, Maternal Health Committee for North Zone and several acute care facilities throughout Alberta.

This change in practice will be monitored and action taken should there be impacts or adverse effects. Patient handouts and discharge information will be available to clients.

If you have any questions about this change, please contact:

- Jennifer Splaine, Area Manager, Population, Public and Indigenous Health North Zone
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- Jordanna Lambert, Director, Population, Public and Indigenous Health North Zone East
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This communication will be archived on the AHS MOH website for reference:
<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/7082.asp>