



# STATE OF NEW YORK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

433 River Street, Suite 303  
Troy, New York 12180-2299

February 7, 2007  
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Dear Chief Executive Officer:

Current clinical guidance and recommendations promote education and strategies for Perinatal Group B Streptococcal Disease (GBS) prevention. This letter is intended to affirm for facilities providing maternal/newborn or outpatient pre-natal services, the obligation to adopt written policies and GBS prevention protocols.

Perinatal Group B Streptococcal Disease continues to be a significant public health concern. It is one of the leading causes of serious neonatal disease primarily presenting as infant sepsis. Standards of professional practice for the prevention of Perinatal GBS, Center for Disease Control and Prevention ([www.cdc.gov/groupbstrep](http://www.cdc.gov/groupbstrep)), and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists ([www.acog.org](http://www.acog.org)) include, in part, guidelines for pre-natal screening, prophylaxis regimens for women with penicillin allergy and recommendations for the management of patients with pre-term delivery and for newborns exposed to intrapartum prophylaxis. Adherence to active prevention efforts and the adoption of perinatal GBS disease prevention guidelines have shown reductions in the incidences of early-onset disease for neonates.

In support of these measures, the Department will, when conducting ongoing surveillance activities including routine surveillance, complaint or NYPORTS related investigations, expect to see written hospital policies and clinical protocols to support a perinatal GBS prevention program. It is expected that consistent with current standards of professional practice each hospital will:

- ❑ develop/implement written policies and clinical protocols aimed to reduce the incidence of GBS neonatal disease;
- ❑ provide to patients educational materials available to promote education and prevention strategies for GBS; Tools are available to promote prevention and educate parents of infants with early-onset GBS disease at [www.cdc.gov/groupbstrep](http://www.cdc.gov/groupbstrep), [www.sales.acog.com](http://www.sales.acog.com) and [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org).
- ❑ implement reporting and occurrence monitoring in conjunction with the hospital's infection control program;
- ❑ educate responsible medical and nursing staff regarding hospital policies and Department reporting requirements; and
- ❑ adhere to the Department's mandatory reporting requirements for GBS disease, [www.health.ny.gov/forms/instructions/doh-389\\_instructions.pdf](http://www.health.ny.gov/forms/instructions/doh-389_instructions.pdf)

Any questions regarding the information provided or Department surveillance activities should be directed to this office at (518) 402-1003.

Sincerely,

Martin  
Division

J. Conroy  
Director  
of Primary & Acute Care Services

