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The National Screening Unit
The Ministry of Health
Wellington



By email: antenatalnewbornscreening@health.govt.nz

Tēnā koe

National guidelines for newborn pulse oximetry screening

Tōpūtanga Tapuhi Kaitiaki o Aotearoa, New Zealand Nurses Organisation (NZNO) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the National guidelines for newborn pulse oximetry screening.

NZNO is the leading professional nursing association and union for nurses in Aotearoa New Zealand, representing 51,000 nurses, midwives, students, kaimahi hauora and health workers on professional and employment matters. NZNO embraces Te Tiriti o Waitangi and contributes to the improvements of the health status and outcomes of all people of Aotearoa New Zealand through influencing health, employment, and social policy development.

Furthermore, we share the intent of the Ministry of Health's definition of equity which equally applies to NZNO work across professional, industrial and member activities.

NZNO supports the implementation of national guidelines for newborn pulse oximetry screening, but is disappointed that District Health Boards (DHBs) will be responsible for funding and operationalising the agreed recommendations within the guidelines. We have concerns that the guidelines would not be funded and implemented equally across the 20 DHBs.

We have reviewed the Screening Algorithm and it clearly identifies each step of the screening process. We do not see timeframes documented from identification of clinical concerns to where the baby is referred for further investigation. In metropolitan areas this may be immediately but what is to be considered appropriate in a rural setting?

NZNO endorses antenatal education for expectant mothers needs to be readily available, in a language and at a literacy level appropriate for those receiving the information.

With the introduction of new medical devices (pulse oximeters in this situation) NZNO has an expectation that those using the devices will be offered training and support to use them appropriately.

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NZNO supports the collect of a minimum data set to monitor quality and equity and the information should be held in a centralised data base within each DHB. Comparison of data across DHBs on an annual basis would provide a clear picture of the success of the newborn pulse oximetry screening guidelines.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the consultation process.

Nāku noa nā



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