

## Florida Hospital Working to Reduce Cesarean Deliveries and Increase Vaginal Birth After Cesarean



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**Background:** Cesarean deliveries have become the most commonly performed surgical procedure in the United States. Between 1996 and 2009, the overall cesarean delivery rate increased 60%, from 20.7% to 32.9%. Florida Hospital was not alone in these healthcare concerns. Healthcare systems across the United States are working to right this trend.

**Interventions:** Numerous initiatives have been undertaken at Florida Hospital to reduce the cesarean delivery rate both in first-time mothers and in those women with a prior history of cesarean delivery and include:

- In March 2016, an Ob hospitalist program was launched at Florida Hospital. By design, the Ob hospitalists were put in place to provide onsite staffing to rapidly respond to emergencies and to act as agents of change in clinical care transformation by modeling best practices. Their continuous inpatient presence also allows for compliance with the 'immediately available' standard set by American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the key critical barrier to trials of labor after cesarean (TOLACs).
- In June 2017, obstetricians began receiving quarterly data on their C-Section rate in low-risk first-time mothers. The data was expanded to include total cesarean delivery rates and VBAC rates and provider names were unmasked. Compared to Q1 2017, Q4 data showed a reduction of the Cesarean Section rate in low-risk first-time mothers of 14%. Engaging physicians in performance data has been consistently presented as a tool for learning. Focus groups were undertaken with high performers which led to a set of best practices that were shared in a variety of forums.
- In November 2017, Florida Hospital conducted a of an induction of labor algorithm created internally by a team of physicians, midwives and nursing leaders to provide evidence-based care for the 30% of women undergoing labor induction at our hospitals. In addition to a 20% reduction in length of stay, the vaginal birth rate in this population increased from 73% to 80%.
- A cesarean delivery worksheet (adapted from the California Maternal Quality Care Collaborative) was piloted with the Ob Hospitalists at Orlando where its use was associated with a reduction in the primary Cesarean Section rate in low-risk mothers from 31% to 22%.

Results: By leveraging OB hospitalists, actively collaborating with providers, creating a multidisciplinary performance review committee, and designing/launching numerous obstetric initiatives, we realized:

- (1) **A 9% decrease in the primary Cesarean Section rate in low-risk first-time mothers.** Twice in the past five months, we have been below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Healthy People 2020 goal of 23.9% in this population.
- (2) Since 2015, the **Vaginal Birth After Cesarean rate has increased 310%** from 2.9% to 11.9% YTD 2018.
- (3) The total **Cesarean Section rate has decreased by 11%** since 2015. Of all deliveries at FH in 2017, 36.0% were cesarean deliveries. In the first quarter of 2018, the total Cesarean Section rate across the Florida Hospital system dropped to 35.6%.

According to Dr. Peter Schoch, Vice President of Population Health and Integrated Health Services for Florida Hospital, Florida Hospital recognizes the need for healthcare reform and is working with companies across Central Florida to change the healthcare landscape for the benefit of our communities. By decreasing the Cesarean rate and increasing the Vaginal Birth After Cesarean rate, we are making significant progress in reducing healthcare-related expenses for both our consumers and our business partners while improving patient experience. Through transparent, innovative partnerships and thoughtful care delivery transformation we will drive toward enhanced access, improved health outcomes and lower cost becoming the first choice in care for patients, providers and payors.