Changes to Breast Milk Feeding Performance Measures PC-05a and PC-05

Effective with October 1, 2015, discharges, The Joint Commission is retiring the Perinatal Care (PC) core measure PC-05a: Exclusive Breast Milk Feeding Considering Mother’s Initial Feeding Plan and revising PC-05: Exclusive Breast Milk Feeding.

PC-05a: Retirement
Feedback from key stakeholders—including health care organizations; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG); the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP); the Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN); and The Joint Commission’s Perinatal Care Technical Advisory Panel—indicate that capturing data on mothers’ preference to not exclusively breast feed has been challenging. Also, some organizations may be concentrating on data collection as much or more than on strategies to increase exclusive breast milk feeding. The retirement of PC-05a allows hospitals to focus their resources on improving rates for PC-05: Exclusive Breast Milk Feeding. Performance on this measure continues to be below 50% at approximately half of Joint Commission–accredited hospitals.

PC-05: Revision
The Joint Commission has revised PC-05 so that maternal medical conditions are no longer excluded. This change was made because these conditions are unusual (affecting approximately 2% of patients) and cannot be modeled in the electronically specified version of PC-05. The removal of measure exclusions will also significantly reduce the burden of data abstraction. The revised measure is similar to PC-02: Cesarean Birth, which reports the cesarean birth rate with no exclusions.

PC-05 will continue to be an accountability measure that is publicly reported on The Joint Commission’s Quality Check® website. However, because some women do not want to exclusively breast feed despite recommendations, and since The Joint Commission is not accounting for these preferences, The Joint Commission expects that performance on PC-05 will remain well below 100%. Therefore, as reported in Joint Commission Online (see March 18, 2015, issue at http://www.jointcommission.org/issues), PC-05 will not be included in the Top Performer on Key Quality Measures® recognition program. In addition, PC-05 will not be included in the composite rate for Performance Improvement (PI) Standard PI.02.01.03, element of performance (EP) 1.* Available evidence suggests that a performance rate of 70% on PC-05 is an achievable target for hospitals.

Exclusive Breast Milk Feeding: Resources
The Joint Commission has compiled the following list of resources to help educate staff and patients on the importance of exclusive breast milk feeding and strategies to help hospitals improve their exclusive breast milk feeding rates.

- CDC breastfeeding resources: http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/
- AAP breastfeeding resources: https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/breastfeeding/Pages/default.aspx; http://www2.aap.org/breastfeeding/

For more information, please see the Core Measure Sets webpage on The Joint Commission website at http://www.jointcommission.org/core_measure_sets.aspx.

* Please note that while Standard PI.02.01.03 is temporarily suspended, PC-05 will not be included in the composite rate when it is reinstated.