



CITY OF HOUSTON

Houston Health Department

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Mayor

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Dear Director/Manager,

We are requesting your assistance with an important Perinatal Hepatitis B survey and chart review. Since 2006 the Houston Health Department (HHD), has partnered with Harris County Birthing Hospitals and prenatal care providers to support the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program. As you are aware, this program requires all prenatal care providers to test every woman for Hepatitis B surface Antigen (HBsAg) during an early prenatal visit.

To assess the hepatitis B screening, reporting of positive HBsAg, and vaccination rate among newborns in 2016 and 2017, HHD is conducting a policy survey and chart review of selected prenatal clinics, and all the birthing hospitals in Harris County. The review will also gather information on other infectious diseases that are transmitted perinatally. This review consists of: (1) policy survey (online survey and review of copy of the policy) (2) a chart review; and (3) feedback session and education.

The survey should be completed by the person responsible for Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention at your hospital. This person may hold the position of Director of Women's services, Director of Nursery, Infection Control or some similar title. The HHD Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program (PHBPP) Coordinator will conduct the chart review. The audit team will visit your hospital between March 5, and April 27, 2018, and will review a select, random sample of medical records for both newborns and their mothers for 2016 and 2017. Representatives from the PHBPP of the HDD will contact your hospital's designated contact person to establish dialogue on what is required and a convenient time to conduct the chart review.

We appreciate your attention to the survey and for helping us to obtain the necessary information for the chart review. Be on the lookout for an email from the PHBPP Coordinator, Essi Havor on Monday February 12, 2018 with a link to the survey. We will ask for your kind attention to complete the survey between February 12 and 24, 2018 and set aside about 20 minutes to take this confidential assessment. Instructions for submission are included with the survey instructions.

The Texas Health and Safety Code (Chapter 81, Subchapter C, §81.041, §81.042, §81.043, §81.044) requires that specific information regarding notifiable conditions, including acute cases of Hepatitis B, be reported to the State Health Services and the local Health Department. Also, the Federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) which protects the privacy of medical information also contains specific exceptions that allow covered entities to disclose [Section 164.512(a)] and release private health information to a public health authority that is authorized by law to collect and receive information for preventing and controlling disease, injury, or disability [Section 164.512(b)]

Your assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Essi Havor, RN at 832-393-4649 or email Essi.Havor@houstontx.gov.

Sincerely,

Joann, Schulte, DO, MPH
Deputy Health Authority/Chief Physician