



The American College of  
Obstetricians and Gynecologists  
WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE PHYSICIANS



Society for  
Maternal • Fetal  
Medicine

Maternal–Fetal Care in Hospitals and Birthing Centers are classified into 4 Levels of Care:

1. Level I – basic, low risk and uncomplicated pregnancies
2. Level II – moderate to high risk
3. Level III – complex maternal and fetal conditions
4. Level IV – the most complex cases

As to the provision of anesthesia care of the maternal–fetal patient, the following providers must include:

**Level I** – Anesthesia providers, such as anesthesiologists, nurse anesthetists or anesthesiologist assistants working with an anesthesiologist for labor analgesia and surgical anesthesia readily available at all times

**Level II** – Anesthesiologist readily available at all times

**Level III** – Anesthesiologist physically present at all times

**Level IV** – Board Certified Anesthesiologist with obstetrical fellowship training physically present at all times

- **Physically present at all times:** the specified person should be on–site in the location where perinatal care is provided, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- **Readily available at all times:** the specified person should be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for consultation and assistance, and able to be physically present on–site within a time frame that incorporates maternal and fetal or neonatal risks and benefits with the provision of care. Further defining this time frame should be individualized by facilities and regions, with input from their obstetric care providers. If referring to the availability of a service, the service should be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week unless otherwise specified.

*The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) is the nation's leading group of physicians providing health care for women. As a private, voluntary, nonprofit membership organization of more than 58,000 members,*

*ACOG strongly advocates for quality health care for women, maintains the highest standards of clinical practice and continuing education of its members, promotes patient education, and increases awareness among its members and the public of the changing issues facing women's health care. [www.acog.org](http://www.acog.org)*

*The Society for Maternal–Fetal Medicine (SMFM) is a non–profit, membership organization based in Washington, DC. With more than 3,500 physicians, scientists and women's health professionals around the world, the Society supports the clinical practice of maternal–fetal medicine by providing education, promoting research and engaging in advocacy to optimize the health of high–risk pregnant women and their babies. SMFM hosts an annual scientific meeting in which new ideas and research related to high–risk pregnancies are unveiled and discussed. For more information, visit [www.smfm.org](http://www.smfm.org).*

Maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity, particularly among women of color, have increased in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that pregnancy–related deaths increased from 7.2 per 100,000 live births in 1987 to 18.0 in 2014, and non–Hispanic black women had a 3.3 times greater pregnancy–related mortality ratio compared with non–Hispanic white women. Furthermore, severe maternal morbidity increased by nearly 200% between 1993 and 2014. In addition, data shared by 13 maternal mortality review committees showed that as many as 60% of pregnancy–related deaths during 2013–2017 were potentially preventable (2). These data underscore the need to focus on the quality and safety of maternal care systems. Implementation of levels of maternal care has been identified as a common theme when identifying actionable opportunities to prevent maternal mortality).

This document is a revision of the original 2015 Levels of Maternal Care Obstetric Care Consensus, which has been revised primarily to clarify terminology and to include more recent data based on [published literature](#) and feedback from levels of maternal care implementation.