



**For more information:**

Tisha Dore  
760.505.9676  
tisha@tishadore.com

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**BETA Healthcare Group Establishes New Standard in OB Patient Safety, Awards 14 California Hospitals for Completing Program with 100% Team Participation**

*BETA's "Quest for Zero" Risk Management Initiative Increases Patient Safety and Improves Staff Communication While Reducing Liability Costs*

**ALAMO, CA. (August 15, 2011)** — BETA Healthcare Group (BETA), the largest insurer of hospital professional liability coverage in California, announced today that 14 member hospitals have been awarded for completing all elements of its annual OB Patient Safety Program. To meet the strict requirements established by BETA as a new standard in OB safety, all members of a participating hospital's perinatal team must complete rigorous "online learnings" and utilize common terminology. The annual training portion of the program is part of BETA's *Quest for Zero* preventable errors initiative. Hospitals that complete the program receive a tiered premium credit that lowers professional liability coverage costs with the completion of "Tier 1" and "Tier 2" requirements. For their combined achievement and leadership in OB patient safety, perinatal teams are awarded a trophy for display in their department.

"In 2010, St. Rose Hospital committed to participate in BETA's annual OB Patient Safety Program that implements proven clinical quality improvement strategies to increase perinatal safety," said Mariellen Faria, Vice President of Patient Services at St. Rose Hospital. "By achieving 100% compliance, our dedicated nursing staff and physicians have raised the bar in perinatal care in our area, and we are proud to collaborate with BETA to set a new standard in OB patient safety."

BETA's OB Patient Safety Program includes 18 hours of eLearning focused on electronic fetal monitoring and analysis, team communication strategies, and emergency management in labor and delivery. As OB nurses and doctors progress through the continuing education program, staff communications become clearer and more consistent, and OB patient safety and risk management continually improve as teams work more closely together. To assist member hospitals in administering one of the components of the program (the annual safety training) to their perinatal teams, BETA covers 50% of the costs.

"The program, administered by member hospitals under the guidance of BETA's veteran OB staff, is a win-win proposition," said Annie Herlik, RN, J.D., CPHRM, BETA Vice President of Risk Management. "OB teams come together to learn new techniques for more effective risk management while working in close collaboration, which bonds and strengthens teams. Most importantly, the program puts patients first ensuring they receive the highest quality care in the safest environment possible."

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For a member hospital to complete the program, its entire OB department—nurses, midwives, residents and doctors—must prove competency in reading and interpreting a fetal heart monitor and utilize a common language in all communication. If a hospital demonstrates total compliance with all elements of the program by the annual deadline in May, the facility will receive a “Tier 1” rate credit of 5% of the first \$5 million in professional liability coverage when the policy renews on July 1.

For the first time, BETA is offering up to a 9% rate credit if member hospitals can also meet criteria established in “Tier 2” of the OB Patient Safety Program. To meet the specific needs of each facility, “Tier 2” offers a cafeteria-style menu of risk reduction activities from which member hospitals can choose including, but not limited to, simulating rare Labor and Delivery emergencies using life-size mannequins as “patients” as well as a multidisciplinary review of fetal heart rate tracings where participating doctors and nurses must read the monitor strips together assessing a baby’s health status, and even implementing a plan for team response to obstetrical hemorrhage with corresponding rehearsals of this emergency.

“Excellence in OB care requires safety, diligence and effective communication,” said Bonnie Bouley, Clinical Nurse Manager Obstetrics, Ventura County Medical Center. “The use of common terminology and completion of BETA’s Advanced Practice Strategies curricula reinforced OB team coordination while maximizing patient safety at our facility. In addition, implementation of BETA’s ‘Tier 2’ Elective Induction Bundle and Obstetrical Hemorrhage Protocol ensures consistency in practice and rapid responses in an OB emergency.”

Now in its third year, BETA’s OB Patient Safety Program is gaining momentum, having established a new standard in perinatal safety among its member hospitals. Since its launch in 2009, the number of healthcare facilities to complete the program has more than doubled. The 14 hospitals to achieve success in the BETA program for 2011 include: Alameda County Medical Center; Delano Regional Medical Center; Lompoc Valley Medical Center; Mendocino Coast District Hospital; Natividad Medical Center; Pioneers Memorial Hospital; Plumas District Hospital; Pomerado Hospital; Ridgecrest Regional Hospital; San Geronio Memorial Hospital; Sierra View District Hospital; St. Rose Hospital; Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System, and Ventura County Medical Center.

“The OB Safety Program is available to all of our member hospitals, which house approximately 10,249 licensed beds in healthcare facilities throughout California and deliver over 50,000 babies per year. The online courses are a key component of our ‘Quest for Zero’ risk management initiative, and we are proud to be leading the establishment of a new standard to enhance clinical knowledge in OB among member hospitals,” added Tom Wander, CEO, BETA Healthcare Group.

To date, 14 of 36 eligible member hospitals have been enrolled in BETA’s OB Safety Program. For additional information on the program, visit [http://www.betahg.com/services/rm\\_ob\\_initiative.asp](http://www.betahg.com/services/rm_ob_initiative.asp). For inquiries from prospective member hospitals, contact Heather Gocke at [hgocke@betahg.com](mailto:hgocke@betahg.com).

### **About BETA Healthcare Group**

BETA Healthcare Group is the largest insurer of hospital professional liability coverage in California. Founded in 1979 as an alternative to commercial malpractice insurance, BETA now serves more than 100 city, county, district and nonprofit hospitals and healthcare facilities in California. In addition to healthcare entity professional liability coverage, the company offers directors and officers liability, employment practices liability, automobile coverage and medical group professional liability.

BETA offers liability coverage through BETA Risk Management Authority and Health Providers Insurance Reciprocal, RRG. The cost-effective structure and dedicated management of these insurers have earned BETA a reputation for financial strength, rate stability, service quality, and breadth of coverage that is unparalleled in the industry. For more information, please visit [www.betahg.com](http://www.betahg.com).

### **BETA Contact Information:**

925.838.6070  
1443 Danville Boulevard, Alamo, CA 94507

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