



NEWS RELEASE

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## NAEMT-ACOG Survey Results Find Gap in EMS Training for Obstetric Emergencies

Clinton, Miss., and Washington, DC, Jan. 24, 2022 – In observance of [Maternal Health Awareness Day](#) on January 23, the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT), in partnership with the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), is reporting the findings of a survey that indicate that many emergency medical services (EMS) practitioners don't feel they have adequate education or training to respond to emergencies in pregnant and postpartum patients. Less than 30% of respondents said they received education or training in the last three years on peripartum cardiomyopathy—one of the leading causes of maternal death in the postpartum period, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The survey aimed to determine the level of EMS practitioner experience in responding to and treating pregnant and postpartum patients during emergencies and identify gaps and opportunities for needed prehospital education and training. More than 1,700 EMS practitioners responded from across the country, representing urban, suburban, rural, and military communities.

“EMS initial education instructs students on prehospital maternal delivery and delivery complications but includes very little specific education on addressing postpartum patient complications,” said NAEMT President Bruce Evans. “The results of this survey indicate that continuing education on treating pregnant and postpartum patients in the prehospital environment is needed, including training for peripartum cardiomyopathy, acute myocardial infarction in pregnancy or postpartum, and venous thromboembolism. It is promising, however, that up to 77% of survey respondents desire to receive further education and training on these conditions.”

According to the survey, less than half of respondents feel they have adequate knowledge of the altered physiology of postpartum patients, and nearly 75% of survey respondents do not ask if patients have been pregnant within the past year, marking a need for increased awareness of urgent maternal warning signs that indicate various pregnancy-related complications during the 12-month postpartum period. View survey results [here](#).

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“Maternal Health Awareness Day provides us with a great opportunity to raise awareness among the public and clinicians alike about the risk for adverse pregnancy-related events that continue up to 12 months postpartum,” said ACOG President J. Martin Tucker, MD, FACOG. “In fact, according to the CDC, approximately one in three pregnancy-related deaths occur one week to one year after delivery, with underlying causes that include cardiovascular conditions and hypertensive emergencies. We look forward to collaborating with NAEMT to address prehospital readiness to identify and manage these emergencies. It will require all clinicians working together to address the nation’s maternal mortality crisis.”

Currently, NAEMT and ACOG are collaborating to highlight the critical role of prehospital practitioners and explore opportunities to bring education and training to practitioners that will enhance recognition and management of these emergencies.

As part of that effort, NAEMT and ACOG, along with 17 other specialty organizations signed a [commitment to action](#) in honor of Maternal Health Awareness Day to eliminate preventable maternal mortality. The multidisciplinary effort will address readiness in prehospital, emergency department, primary care, and urgent care settings to identify and manage obstetric emergencies during pregnancy and the postpartum period. By working together, the organizations aim to improve maternal health outcomes in the United States.

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#### **About NAEMT**

Formed in 1975 and nearly 72,000 members strong, the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians is the only national association representing the professional interests of all emergency and mobile healthcare practitioners, including emergency medical technicians, advanced emergency medical technicians, emergency medical responders, paramedics, advanced practice paramedics, critical care paramedics, flight paramedics, community paramedics, and mobile integrated healthcare practitioners. NAEMT members work in all sectors of EMS, including government agencies, fire departments, hospital-based ambulance services, private companies, industrial and special operations settings, and in the military. [www.naemt.org](http://www.naemt.org)

#### **About ACOG**

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists is the nation’s leading group of physicians providing health care for women. As a private, voluntary, nonprofit membership organization of 60,000 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)