



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
FEBRUARY 11, 2009

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
HANYS: MICHAEL FRASER  
(518) 431-7770  
ACOG: DONNA MONTALTO  
(518) 436-3461  
DOH: CLAUDIA HUTTON  
(518) 473-3384

## **HEALTH CARE LEADERS TEAM UP FOR OBSTETRIC SAFETY**

### **HANYS, ACOG, DOH Develop Initiative To Save Lives Across New York**

ALBANY, N.Y. – The Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS), American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, District II/NY (ACOG), and the New York State Department of Health (DOH) announced today that they are collaborating on a project that will enhance the quality of obstetric care in New York.

*New York State's Obstetric Safety Initiative: Providing Excellence in Electronic Fetal Monitoring* addresses electronic fetal monitoring (EFM), the use of electronic equipment to help record and monitor the heart rate of a fetus in the uterus during childbirth. The goal of the initiative is to improve fetal outcomes in New York by standardizing how obstetric team members interpret EFM results and discuss them with other members of their obstetric teams. The initiative is made possible through support by the New York State Health Foundation.

“I’m pleased to join with ACOG and HANYS in this important project that will improve the care women and babies receive,” said New York State Health Commissioner Richard F. Daines M.D. “This will go a long way to address inconsistencies in electronic fetal interpretation and ensure that women across New York State have access to obstetrical health care teams that develop standard approaches to fetal monitoring to promote improved birth outcomes for women and their babies.”

“Electronic fetal monitoring is an invaluable tool that provides critical information to hospital staff, and helps to ensure safety during childbirth,” HANYS President Daniel Sisto said. “But EFM is most successful when there is a consistency in its interpretation, management, and communication between caregivers. Obstetric care isn’t simply a service a hospital provides – it’s a commitment of caregivers that touches lives of mothers, families, and infants. I’m proud that HANYS and our partners are launching this collaborative effort to improve the quality of obstetric care and service for patients across New York State.”

Electronic fetal monitoring is used in approximately 85% of births nationwide.

“Used appropriately, EFM can warn obstetric teams of potential fetal complications that lead to injury, including brain damage or death,” said Donna Montalto, MPP, Executive Director of ACOG District II in NY. “We are honored to be playing a major role in this initiative.”

Over the next several months, members from the *Obstetric Safety Initiative Task Force*, made up of representatives from ACOG, HANYS, and DOH, will collect preliminary data related to electronic fetal monitoring from hospitals across New York.

During June and July of 2009, six medical conferences will take place across the state to educate obstetric professionals about standardizing how they define, discuss, interpret and manage electronic fetal monitoring. Following the conference training, the *Obstetric Safety Initiative Task Force* will be available to guide obstetric teams as they standardize their approach to EFM. Their progress will then be monitored six months and a year after the training.

*The Healthcare Association of New York State (HANYS) is the only statewide hospital and continuing care association in New York State, representing more than 550 non-profit and public hospitals, nursing homes, home care agencies, and other health care organizations.*

*The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, District II/NY (ACOG) represents over 4,000 board certified obstetrician-gynecologists in the state who deliver health care to New York’s women. To learn more about ACOG, visit [www.acogny.org](http://www.acogny.org).*

*The New York State Health Foundation is a private foundation dedicated to improving the health of all New Yorkers. NYSHHealth has a three-part mission: expanding health insurance coverage, increasing access to high-quality health care services, and improving public and community health by educating New Yorkers about health issues and empowering communities to address them.*

*-###-*