

**SONPM Update:**  
**VON Impact Audit & Studying Perinatal COVID-19**

SONPM-VON Impact Audit

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The impact of COVID-19 on the care of the newborn infants and families we serve is highly uncertain and the situation has dramatically evolved throughout the pandemic. The SONPM has partnered with the Vermont Oxford Network on the VON SONPM Covid-19 Impact Audit. We want to understand how the pandemic has affected neonatal care as widely as possible, so the audit—which, in typical VON fashion, is extremely easy to perform—is open to all hospitals caring for newborns, regardless of VON membership. The audit was initially performed on one day each month and has now shifted to quarterly.

The initial results from 434 hospitals that participated in April were published in Pediatrics.  
<https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/146/5/e2020002824>

We have seen a dip and then a significant surge in cases since then, as the weather turns colder, school restarts and people spend more time inside. The emergence of MIS-C poses a new challenge for pediatricians. Many places are seeing a spike in new COVID-19 cases believed to be related to gatherings over the Thanksgiving holiday and we are now in the most celebrated holiday week in our country. On the other side, treatment is now better understood and COVID-19 vaccines are making their way into the population. All of these shift the demands on resources for neonatal care, the desire for visitation and our ability to care for our babies and families in the ideal way we would like.

There is still time to participate in this quarter's audit. The current audit will be conducted on a day of your choosing during the month of December.

<https://public.vtoxford.org/covid-19/>

I strongly encourage you to participate in this study. It is not labor intensive and, together, we have the potential to add greatly to our understanding of the challenges teams face and to help guide decision making for all newborn care teams. Even if your unit has experienced low numbers of cases or suspected cases, your input in Part 2 of the audit will be an important contribution.

Perinatal COVID-19 Registry

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The National Perinatal COVID-19 Registry was initiated to understand the relative risks of transplacental, perinatal, and postnatal transmission of this disease as well as about the efficacy of infection control practices. Initially only reporting on COVID-19 positive women from 14 days prior to 3 days after delivery, the registry has been expanded to include mothers with COVID-19 resolved during pregnancy.

The Registry has now (as of December 18<sup>th</sup>) collected data on 5127 mother-infant dyads—the largest such data set amassed in the pandemic. Remember all of those early papers with 3-6, or even 1 mother infant pair?

Mark Hudak coordinates this incredible project, a collaboration of SONPM, VON and Mednax. Karen Puopolo, Jeffrey Horbar and Reese Clark are key investigators. De-identified data are submitted via Univ of Florida REDCap. There are 286 active centers in almost every US state. The data is reported every Friday and can be viewed clearly on the infographic on our website: <https://my.visme.co/view/ojq9qq8e-npc-19-registry>.

Through this effort, we have learned that vertical transmission is very rare, and that it is safe to care for mothers and babies together. Breast feeding and skin-to-skin care can be encouraged. It is important to take into consideration the physical layout of your NICU when adapting these lessons to your situation, but this study allows important decisions about neonatal care to be made on the basis of evidence. The data through the end of 2020 will be submitted for publication in January of 2021. This will be a landmark.

You can still join the team in this important work. Information about the registry can be found on our website under the 'In the Spotlight' section: <https://services.aap.org/en/community/aap-sections/sonpm/in-the-spotlight/>.

#### UCSF PRIORITY Study

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Another opportunity to learn about the biology and impact of SARS-CoV-2 in the perinatal period is the PRIORITY (Pregnancy coRonavirus Outcomes RegISTrY) Study, coordinated by a team of investigators at UCSF. This is a study that enrolls pregnant or recently pregnant women who are COVID-19 positive or PUIs. Data is collected throughout pregnancy and through 8 weeks after delivery. Physicians can refer their patients to self-enroll, so there are no IRB requirements to participate.

Here is the link to refer your patients for self-enrollment:

<https://priority.ucsf.edu/healthcare-providers#What-will-happen-if-I-refer-a-patient>,

along with the flyer about the study:

<https://priority.ucsf.edu/sites/g/files/tkssra5181/f/wysiwyg/PRIORITY%20Study-UCSF%20Flyer%2005152020.pdf>

All three of these studies are easy ways for you to engage in solid scholarship about how COVID-19 affects you, your patients and their families. For minimal effort, you can contribute significantly to our knowledge about the disease that has so impacted our lives in 2020. Please consider participation and join me in wishing for a 2021 with much less need for new studies like these.

In closing, I would like to share one of my favorite videos with you...about how to truly assess the wellbeing of a community: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dg\\_tlwk0Uww](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dg_tlwk0Uww)

Take care and stay well,  
Lily

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