

Whether you're a first time mom, or an experienced mom, bringing a new baby into the world is an exciting and special time.

But, it can also be confusing, with conflicting information online and advice coming out of the woodwork. For Ottawa resident Denise Dock, it was a lot to sift through on her own.

SOT

Denise Dock, OB Nurse Navigator Patient

"I was very overwhelmed. Very overwhelmed at first."

That's why the OB Nurse Navigator program was born. The goal of the program is to help OB patients gain confidence as they move forward on their journey toward parenthood.

Starting during the 20th week of pregnancy, expectant mothers are paired with a Nurse Navigator. From providing education to giving moms a tour of the Birthing Center, an OB Nurse Navigator is on hand to offer insight and advice.

SOT

Terri Arteman, RN, OSF HealthCare OB Nurse Navigator

"I think it's increased our satisfaction between the patient, our nursing staff and our physicians also. It's helped with coordination of care, getting them signed up for birth-ed classes, breastfeeding classes, and things like that. They seemed real pleased with it."

Dock was the first OB Nurse Navigator patient at OSF Saint James-John W Albrecht Medical Center in Pontiac. She was paired with Arteman for her pregnancy and the birth of her daughter – 16 month old Mikayla.

She says the open lines of communication with Arteman gave her comfort throughout her pregnancy.

SOT

Denise Dock, OSF HealthCare OB Nurse Navigator Patient

"It helped a lot, because I had a lot of scares. I started spotting, and I was like, 'Oh my gosh what's going on.' All I had to do was text her, and she was like, 'It's okay. It's normal. It happens,' and let me know if it's a lot go in, and if it's not then don't."

The relationship doesn't end when the patient and her new baby go home. It continues so mom knows that no matter what she needs in those early days, there's an expert on hand to help.

SOT

Terri Arteman, RN, OSF HealthCare OB Nurse Navigator

"The unknown is fearful and makes them more scared, and so I think they're more comfortable when they come in and they've already met some of our staff, and they are seeing a friendly face when they come through our door. I think it helps with that, too," said Arteman.

SOT

Denise Dock, OSF HealthCare OB Nurse Navigator Patient

"It helps you learn more than, like, the pamphlets that they give you," said Dock. "More than even the classes, I think. And they give you a lot of resources and the tools to learn more."

Three OSF HealthCare facilities currently offer an OB Nurse Navigator Program: OSF Saint James in Pontiac, OSF St. Joseph Medical Center in Bloomington, and OSF Saint Francis Medical Center in Peoria.

The following is a step-by-step guide to the Program. Once a patient signs up for the program, an OB Nurse Navigator will contact her to set up a time to meet.

20 Weeks:

An OB Nurse Navigator will meet with you one-on-one at the hospital for approximately two hours. She will explain how the program works, provide you with educational materials, and review information about changes during pregnancy and prenatal testing. The navigator will give an overview of our Family Birthing Center, and share information about classes available to help prepare you for the arrival of your baby. At the end of the visit, you will receive a tour of the Birthing Center.

28 Weeks:

An OB Nurse Navigator will schedule a phone call with you to discuss pediatrician selection, your infant feeding plan, and answer any questions you may have at this point.

36 Weeks:

An OB Nurse Navigator will schedule a final meeting with you at the hospital to review some additional educational information for the last weeks of your pregnancy. Your navigator will also provide login information so you can review some short videos on The Newborn Channel, to prepare for the arrival of your newborn. Finally, she will go over what you can expect when you come in to deliver in the Family Birthing Center, and answer any additional questions about the big day!

You will choose how involved you want to be with the OB Nurse Navigator Program. You can just attend the scheduled meetings only, or you are welcome to contact a navigator as often as you need outside of the meetings. All of our navigators are Registered Nurses at our Birthing Center. An ongoing communication plan will be customized to fit your needs.