

PRINT-OSF St. Joseph Medical Center launches OB emergency department for faster care

Pregnant women seeking emergency care at OSF HealthCare Saint Joseph Medical Center in Bloomington will soon have access to a dedicated OB emergency department, or OB ED, designed to provide faster, specialized treatment for pregnancy-related concerns.

Medical Center leaders say the new system will streamline care for patients from 20 weeks gestation through six weeks postpartum by combining emergency triage with around-the-clock obstetric expertise.

Kristin Salyards, MSN, RNC-OB. manager, Family Birthing Center at OSF Saint Joseph Medical Center says most pregnant women will still enter the hospital through traditional channels, including the emergency department, but staff will quickly determine whether they should be treated in the OB ED.

"They will receive education from their providers offices, but they can also just present to the hospital like they have before," says Salyards. "When they present to the ER, then the ER and the OB teams will collaborate to determine the best location for treatment for those patients."

Women referred by their obstetric provider for pregnancy-related concerns can be directed straight to the OB ED upon arrival.

Located within the Family Birthing Center on the second floor, the OB ED features private space dedicated to the evaluation and management of pregnancy-related concerns. This specialized setting ensures patients receive expert care tailored to their unique needs. It also provides quick access to labor and delivery rooms, operating rooms and the special care nursery if emergency intervention becomes necessary.

Non-obstetric emergencies will continue to be treated in the main emergency department.

The main goal of the OB ED is reducing delays and stress for expectant mothers experiencing complications or urgent concerns.

Salyards explains, "It's ensuring that our moms have access to care when they need it, as soon as they need it right here."

A key change is the addition of an in-house obstetrics provider available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Previously, nurses handled the initial obstetric triage process before contacting providers as needed.

"The provider being in house 24/7 allows that immediate triage by an OB trained provider and then also allows that provider to be in house to provide whatever treatment is necessary for those moms."

Staff members throughout the obstetrics department are being cross-trained to work in multiple areas of care, allowing the hospital to adjust staffing levels as patient needs fluctuate.

The introduction of the OB ED also enhances coordination across hospital departments. Diagnostic orders, imaging, and lab services for obstetric emergency patients will be associated with the OB ED location within the electronic medical record, supporting accurate routing and efficient care delivery while maintaining standard workflows for collection, transport, and reporting.

Officials say a broader refresh of the Family Birthing Center that will include the addition of the OB ED is intended to create a calmer, more welcoming environment for patients and families while improving access to specialized maternity care.

For more information about the Obstetric Emergency Department at OSF HealthCare St. Joseph Medical Center, please visit [our website](#).