

Introduction

Pregnancy and Newborn Screening Resource Portfolio

Developments to the screening programmes for pregnant women and newborn babies are being made across Scotland to strengthen and extend the existing screening programmes.

Screening has a higher profile in both public and professional publications now as knowledge is shared and issues debated. Screening can involve difficult choices and it is therefore extremely important that people offered screening get the information they need. This includes information to decide whether they want to be screened and, if they are found to have a condition, what treatment and advice they would like.

In pregnancy and newborn care women and families need full information about the screening tests offered to ensure they can make informed choices. Professionals need up-to-date knowledge of the conditions screened for and the screening process and pathways to ensure they are able to facilitate informed choice with confidence.

This resource has been developed to provide busy practitioners easy access to relevant up to date teaching materials so that staff can be trained locally.

The changes to the national pregnancy and newborn screening programmes are laid out in the NHS Scotland Chief Executive's Letter (CEL) 31 (2008). http://www.sehd.scot.nhs.uk/mels/CEL2008_31.pdf.

The main changes to the screening programmes are:

- Combined ultrasound and biochemical screening (CUBS) for Down's syndrome in the first trimester
- quadruple serum screening for Down's syndrome for women who book too late for the first trimester screening
- a standardised fetal anomaly scan in the second trimester
- introduction of haemoglobinopathy screening during pregnancy and sickle cell screening for newborn babies
- the extension of the newborn bloodspot screening programme to include screening for Medium Chain Acyl CoA Dehydrogenase Deficiency (MCADD)

All NHS Boards are now offering as routine, a fetal anomaly scan with all the other changes to be implemented by the end of March 2011.



The UK National Screening Committee

Screening programmes are public health services that need to be managed at the level of a large population to monitor quality effectively. In the UK this function is carried out by the UK National Screening Committee (NSC). The NSC was established in 1996 and has a remit to advise Ministers, the devolved National Assemblies and the Scottish Parliament on all aspects of screening policy. Proposals for new screening programmes are assessed against a set of internationally recognised criteria which cover the condition in question, the test, the treatment options and the effectiveness and acceptability of the screening programmes.

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National Services Division

Screening policy is set by the Scottish Government Health Directorates (SGHD) on the advice of the UK National Screening Committee and other appropriate bodies.

Pocket sized resource cards to support the pregnancy and newborn screening programmes in Scotland are also available - please contact your screening midwife or practice development midwife for your copy



National Services Division (NSD) is charged by the SGHD to support NHS Scotland in providing a range of pregnancy and newborn screening programmes. NSD have a particular role in ensuring that the highest possible standards of care are delivered within available resources and that there is a consistent and reliable approach within screening programmes for all residents of Scotland. For the pregnancy and newborn screening programmes this involves contributing to national multi-disciplinary steering groups to monitor and evaluate the programmes and producing training and information materials to support the screening staff. NSD are also responsible for leading, coordinating and supporting NHS Boards in implementing any additions/amendments to pregnancy and newborn screening policies in Scotland. Additionally NSD commission the laboratory service for the newborn bloodspot testing programme.

NHS Health Scotland

NHS Health Scotland produces patient information to support the screening programmes. Both the patient information leaflets have recently been revised to reflect the developments to the screening programmes and are available in hard copy from Health Scotland or to download at: www.healthscotland.com/pnscreening



NHS Education for Scotland

To support these changes, Lucy Powls, has been appointed as Project Lead by NHS Education for Scotland (NES) in collaboration with National Services Division (NSD) to identify and manage the education and training that will be required in order for staff involved in the screening programmes to deliver the changes.

A pregnancy and newborn screening developments network has been set up, which will allow health professionals involved in the screening programmes to share learning and best practice. An online shared space has been created through the NHS Knowledge Network, which is a virtual workspace to help health professionals to share knowledge and work together.

There is also a dedicated Pregnancy and Newborn Developments website which has been developed to support healthcare professionals working on the screening programmes. It provides online access to training materials, standardised national protocols, care pathways and approved project documentation. All the training materials in this resource are available in an electronic format on this web site.

View the website at: <http://www.pnsd.scot.nhs.uk>
For further information on any of these developments please contact:
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