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California Department of Public Health



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor

Date: July 19, 2010

TO: CALIFORNIA HOSPITALS

SUBJECT: PROVIDING SIDS RISK REDUCTION INFORMATION TO PARENTS OF NEWBORNS (California Health and Safety Code Sections 1254.6 and 1596.847)

This letter is in reference to California Health and Safety Code Sections 1254.6 and 1596.847, which requires all hospitals in California to provide Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) risk reduction information to all parents of newborns. A copy of California Health and Safety Code Sections 1254.6 and 1596.847 (HSC §1254.6 & 1596.847), which was enacted on July 1, 1998 pursuant to AB 757, is enclosed. At the time this legislation went into effect all California hospitals received a letter from the California Maternal and Child Health Program with samples of SIDS risk reduction materials for distribution to parents of newborns.

To help reduce sudden unexpected deaths in infancy, the California Department of Public Health launched the "Back to Sleep" Campaign in 1994 to inform parents of infants about ways to reduce the risk of an infant dying from SIDS. This Campaign has dramatically decreased the number of babies dying from SIDS. Since the implementation of HSC §1254.6 & 1596.847, the efforts of many health professionals providing SIDS risk reduction information to parents of newborns have contributed to the decline in the number and rate of SIDS deaths. Between 1999 and 2007, SIDS rates have declined 29 percent. However, SIDS was still the second leading cause of death for infants between 28 days of age to less than one year of age in 2007 in California, indicating the need for continuous efforts to decrease SIDS deaths.

The California Department of Public Health and the California State SIDS Advisory Council are writing to all California hospitals to remind you that providing SIDS risk reduction information to parents of newborns is required under California law. To meet the requirements of HSC §1254.6 & 1596.847, each hospital may use existing materials, or they may develop their own materials as long as the information is consistent with the American Academy of Pediatrics "Safe Sleep Top Ten" messages, endorsed by the California Department of Public Health. Every hospital is responsible for the reproduction of any items they choose to distribute. Appropriate SIDS risk reduction materials and resources can be accessed and downloaded at the following websites:

- California Health & Safety Code Sections 1254.6 and 1596.847
http://info.sen.ca.gov/pub/97-98/bill/asm/ab_0751-0800/ab_757_bill_19970811_chaptered.pdf
- The California SIDS Program
<http://www.californiasids.com/Universal/MainPage.cfm?p=10>

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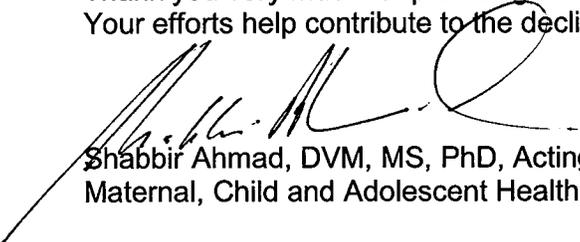
- The National Back to Sleep Campaign
http://www.nichd.nih.gov/publications/pubs/upload/bts_order_form_2006.pdf
- National Sudden and Unexpected Infant/Child Death and Pregnancy Loss Resource Center <http://www.sidscenter.org/>

A SIDS risk reduction handout developed by the National Back to Sleep Campaign and a free materials order form are enclosed for your reference.

In addition to the distribution of risk reduction information, the California Department of Public Health encourages hospitals to continue policies that require their personnel to model back to sleep practices to encourage parents to adopt these practices at home. Sample hospital safe sleep policies and procedures are available from the First Candle/SIDS Alliance website: <http://www.firstcandle.org/?s=model+behavior+sample+policy>.

If you would like additional information or need assistance in obtaining SIDS risk reduction materials or professional training resources, please contact the California SIDS Program at (800) 369-SIDS (7437). If you have any other questions, please contact Guey-Shiang Tsay, California Department of Public Health, Maternal Child and Adolescent Health Nurse Consultant for the SIDS Program, at Guey-Shiang.Tsay@cdph.ca.gov.

Thank you very much for providing SIDS risk reduction information to parents of newborns. Your efforts help contribute to the decline in SIDS rates.



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Enclosures