

641—150.1(135) Purpose and scope. Hospitals within the state shall determine whether to participate in Iowa's regionalized system of perinatal health care and shall select the hospital's level of participation in the regionalized system. A hospital having determined to participate in the regionalized system shall comply with the rules appropriate to the levels of participation for maternal care and neonatal care selected by the hospital. Maternal levels of designation and neonatal levels of designation are evaluated separately, and a hospital may have a level of designation for maternal care that is different from the level of designation for neonatal care; however, a pregnant woman should be cared for at the hospital that best meets both her and her newborn infant's needs.

Iowa's regionalized system of perinatal health care helps practitioners in rural Iowa to rapidly access specialty services for their patients even though such services may not exist in the local community. This is predicated on several factors, including the willingness of certain hospitals in moderate-to-large Iowa cities to provide specialty services and the presence of a functional system of patient transportation. These rules address how participating Iowa hospitals relate to the regionalized system and suggest a level of functioning which should identify the role each participating hospital plays in the system.

The following rules present a description of the levels of care among Iowa perinatal hospitals. The levels are as follows: maternal levels of care, which include Level I maternal care hospital, Level II maternal care hospital, Level III maternal care hospital and Level IV maternal care hospital, and neonatal levels of care, which include Level I neonatal care hospital, Level II neonatal care hospital, Level III neonatal care hospital and Level IV neonatal care hospital. Due to the need for organization of limited resources in a rural state, the rules are designed to encourage and support the presence of Level II and Level III maternal care and neonatal care hospitals in areas not populous enough to support a Level IV maternal care and neonatal care hospital.

The rules are not meant to hold Iowa hospitals and Iowa perinatal professionals to an impractical ideal. The rules specify particulars for a tiered provision of care on the basis of functional capabilities, based on national recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

The primary purpose of the level of care designation is to ensure Iowa perinatal patients receive appropriate maternal and neonatal care as close to their homes as possible.

The rules provide a framework to ensure that, when a participating hospital represents itself at a particular level of perinatal care, the hospital is capable of providing that care. The public is entitled to know the level of functioning of a hospital. The rules provide the framework for defining and evaluating the level of perinatal services offered by a hospital.

[ARC 3835C, IAB 6/6/18, effective 7/11/18]