

## **The Role of Obstetrics in Perinatal Mental Health**

### **Scope of Practice**

Obstetrics providers focus on the reproductive physiology as well as social, cultural, environmental, and genetic factors that affect women's reproductive systems, particularly during pregnancy (The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, n.d.).

- Provide care during preconception, pregnancy, childbirth, and the first several weeks postpartum
- Screening for mental health conditions
- Prenatal screenings, exams, and lab tests
- Evaluating baby's size, growth, and position during pregnancy
- Monitor pregnancy
- Manage labor and delivery
- Provide care for six weeks postpartum
- Manage complications during pregnancy and postpartum
- Provide appropriate referrals to other disciplines

(American Academy of Pediatrics, 2012 & American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2012 as cited in Corrigan et al., 2015; Corrigan et al., 2015; Cleveland Clinic, 2022; Podulka et al., 2011)

### **Conditions for Referral**

Obstetricians are referred to when a woman finds out she is pregnant to monitor the pregnancy throughout.

- Pregnancy: Obstetricians monitor healthy pregnancies to full term, deliver the baby, and provide care postpartum.
- Obstetricians manage conditions and diseases during pregnancy including:
  - High blood pressure or preeclampsia
  - Ectopic pregnancy and miscarriages

- Placental abruption
- Nausea
- Gestational Diabetes
- Infections
- Genetic Disorders
- Obstetricians may be referred to for surgeries including:
  - Episiotomy
  - Dilation and curettage
  - Vaginal delivery
  - Cesarean delivery
  - Cervical cerclage

(American Academy of Pediatrics, 2012 & American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2012 as cited in Corrigan et al., 2015; Corrigan et al., 2015; Cleveland Clinic, 2022; Podulka et al., 2011)

## References

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