 Department of Health Government of Nunavut		NURSING POLICY, PROCEDURE AND PROTOCOLS	
		Community Health Nursing	
TITLE:		SECTION:	POLICY NUMBER:
Episiotomy		Clinical Procedures	11-016-00
EFFECTIVE DATE:	REVIEW DUE:	REPLACES NUMBER:	NUMBER OF PAGES:
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APPLIES TO:			
Community Health Nurses			

POLICY

Registered Nurses may not perform episiotomies in the health centre setting. The only exception to this policy would be in an obstetrical emergency, whereby delivery of the infant is impeded by a breech presentation or shoulder dystocia.

DEFINITIONS

Breech Presentation is defined as a fetus in a longitudinal lie with the buttocks or feet closest to the cervix.

Shoulder Dystocia occurs when, after delivery of the fetal head, the baby's anterior shoulder becomes stuck behind the mother's pubic bone. Delivery is then impeded.

PRINCIPLES

- Shoulder dystocia is an obstetrical emergency and has the potential for causing significant, lifelong injury or even fetal demise. Episiotomy is not a mandatory manoeuvre in the management of shoulder dystocia, however, it may be clinically indicated to conduct some manoeuvres.
- Episiotomies may be performed when indicated to facilitate delivery of a breech presentation.
- RNANTNU (2004) outlines the decision-making model for registered nurses performing additional nursing functions (see reference sheet 05-008-03).

RELATED POLICIES, GUIDELINES AND LEGISLATION

Policy 05-008-00	Nursing Practice – additional nursing function
Guideline 05-008-01	Developing a Policy for Additional Nursing Functions
Guideline 05-008-02	Performing Additional Nursing Functions
Guideline 05-008-03	Decision-making model for performing additional nursing functions and transferred functions
Policy 05-009-00	Transferred Functions
Guideline 05-009-01	Policy Guidelines for Transferred Functions



REFERENCES

Hutten-Czapski, P., and Anderson, A. (2007). The Occasional Shoulder Dystocia. *Canadian Medical Association*.

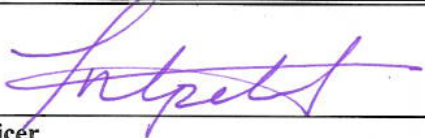

Kotaska, AD, Menticoglou, SM, and Gagnon, R. (2009). Vaginal Delivery of Breech Presentation. *Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada*.

Nunavut *Nursing Act* (S.Nu. 2003, c.17).

Perinatal manual of Southwest Ontario. *Chapter 12 Shoulder Dystocia*.

Registered Nurses Association of Northwest Territories and Nunavut (2004). *Guidelines for Nursing Practice Decisions*. Yellowknife: RNANTNU

Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (2006). *The Management of Breech Presentation*.

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Chief Nursing Officer	11 FEB 2011 Date	April 1, 2011
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Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services		

