SAFE Birth VA: Hospital Survey Results

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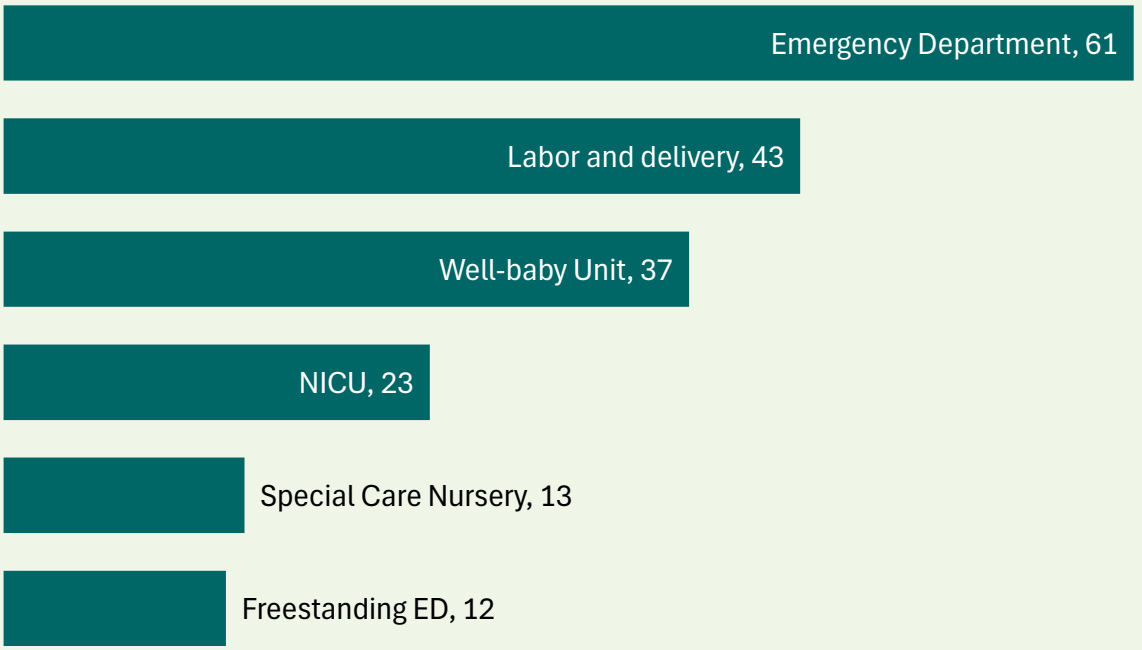
Background

SAFE Birth VA (Standardized Approaches For Emergencies in Birth – Virginia) is a VNPC (Virginia Neonatal Perinatal Collaborative) initiative ordered by HB2753/SB1279, which was signed into law in March 2025. The initiative seeks to protect the lives of pregnant and postpartum mothers and their babies by improving emergency care in birth setting. HB2753/SB1279 requires all Virginia hospitals with emergency department or labor and delivery units, freestanding emergency departments, and birthing centers to work with the VNPC to implement standardized protocols for identifying and responding to serious obstetric emergencies – such as hemorrhage, preeclampsia, and eclampsia. These protocols are derived from evidence-based guidelines, which the VNPC facilitates in supporting hospitals and outpatient providers with statewide implementation.

As part of Phase 1 of the SAFE Birth VA initiative, the VNPC has developed a dedicated webpage and conducted informational webinars. In addition, the VNPC has surveyed hospitals to compile a statewide database of hospital contacts and to assess the current knowledge base within Virginia facilities. The initial survey results, summarized in this report, include responses from 71 hospitals as of December 16, 2025.A formal report was submitted to the General Assembly at the end of September, and the initiative is now moving into Phase 2. The VNPC will use these findings, along with subsequent survey data, to guide the implementation of quality improvement projects tailored to hospital needs.

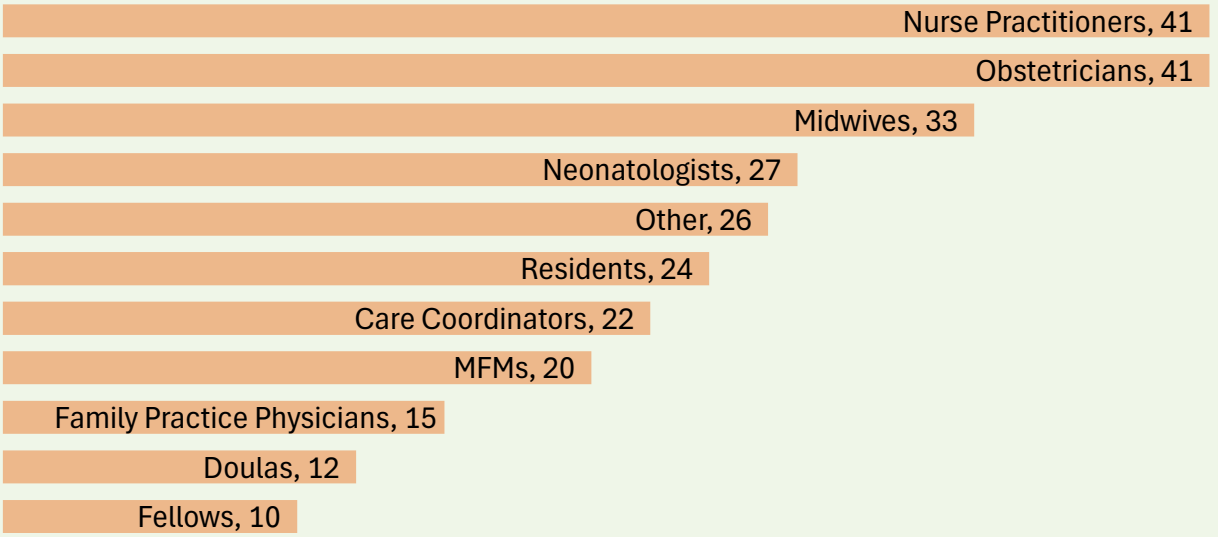
Most responding facilities have an emergency department, labor and delivery unit, and well-baby unit.

Survey Question 5: Please select which of the following are at your facility. (select all that apply)



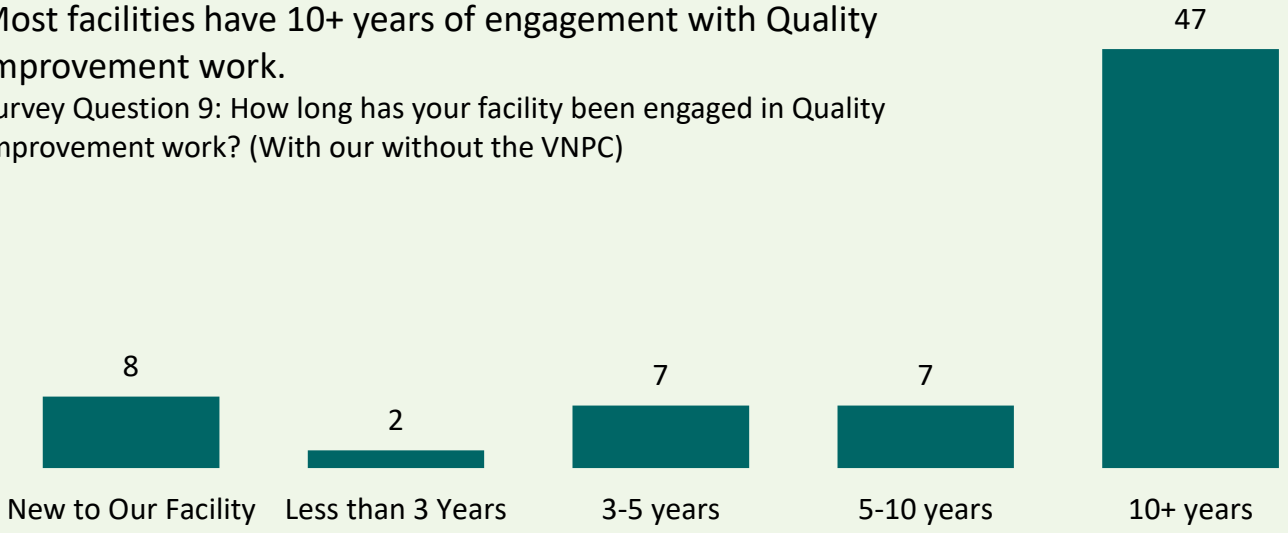
Most facilities have nurse practitioners and obstetricians as a part of their care teams.

Survey Question 6: Are any of the following on your care teams? (select all that apply)



Most facilities have 10+ years of engagement with Quality Improvement work.

Survey Question 9: How long has your facility been engaged in Quality Improvement work? (With our without the VNPC)

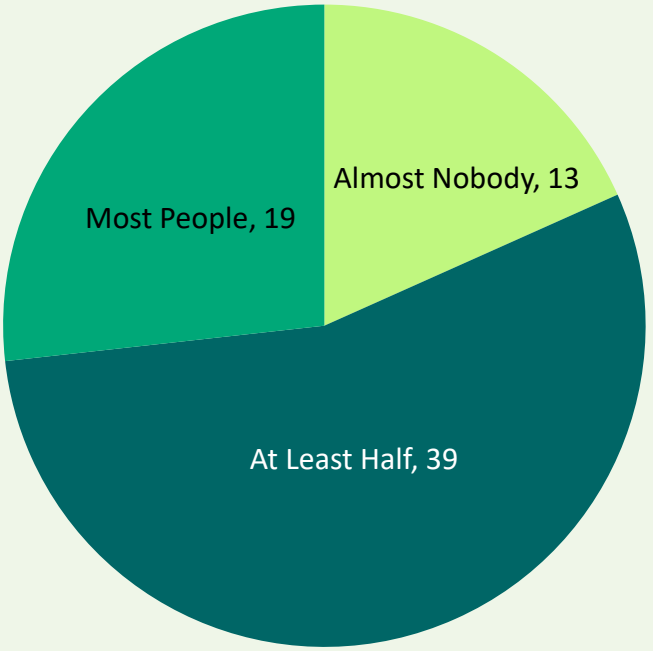


Facilities responded that PDSA (Plan Do Study Act) and Lean Six Sigma are the most used models for QI.

Survey Question 9b

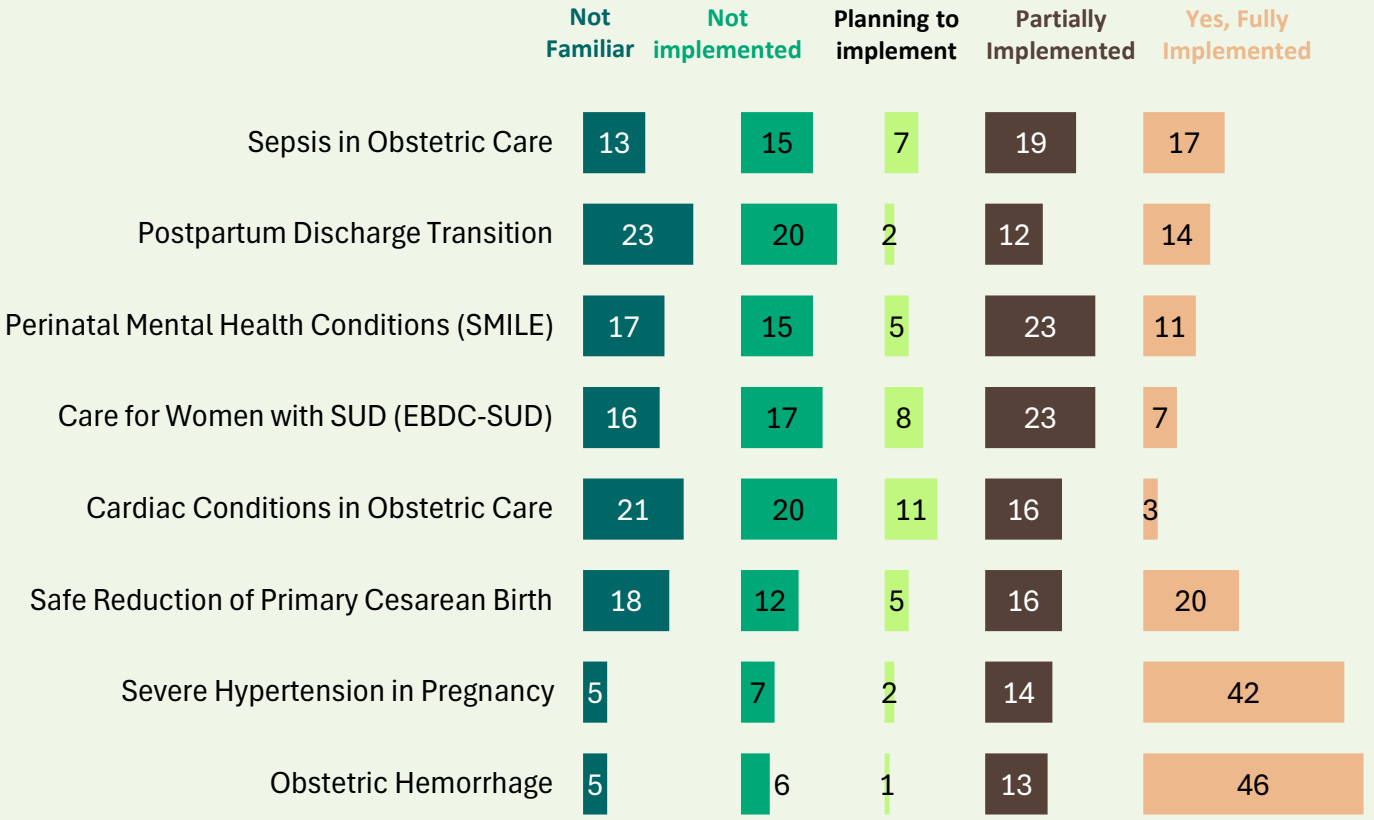
At most facilities, at least half of people in the organization have had formal training in QI

Survey Question 12: At the organization level, how extensive has training been for quality improvement?



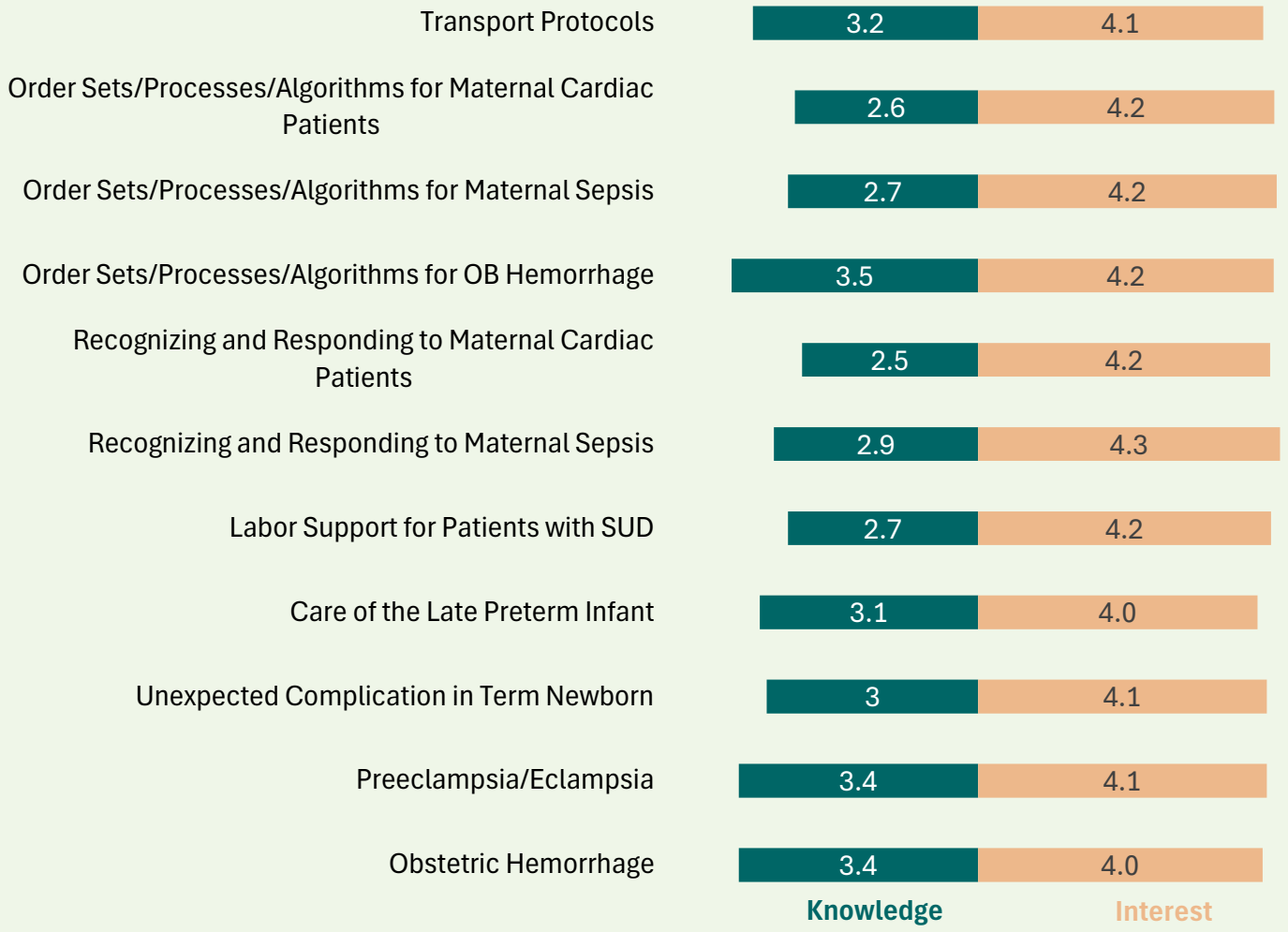
Most facilities reported having fully implemented the Obstetric Hemorrhage bundle.

Survey Question 19: Has your facility implemented any of the AIM patient safety bundles?



On average, responding facilities have a moderate amount of knowledge for each of the SAFE Birth VA topics of interest.

Survey Question 20/21: Please express the knowledge/interest your facility has for each topic. (On a scale of 1-5, 1 being No Knowledge



This survey provides a comprehensive overview of the current knowledge base within Virginia hospitals and highlights areas where additional support is most needed. While many facilities are already utilizing QI tools and implementing key protocols, further progress is required in critical areas such as maternal cardiac care, postpartum transitions, and the safe reduction of primary cesarean births. These findings will inform the next steps of the SAFE Birth VA initiative, enabling the VNPC to strategically allocate resources and training to maximize impact. Through collaboration and the sharing of effective practices, the initiative aims to enhance the safety of childbirth for all mothers and infants across Virginia.

Looking ahead, the priority of SAFE Birth VA is to translate these insights into action. This will involve partnering with hospitals and birth centers to address gaps, share resources, and provide targeted support where it is most needed. SAFE Birth VA extends beyond the adoption of protocols; it is focused on fostering a statewide culture of safety and collaboration. Incremental improvements bring the initiative closer to its goal of ensuring that every mother and infant receives the highest standard of care, regardless of delivery setting. Through sustained engagement, transparency, and commitment, these findings can be transformed into meaningful advancements that save lives and strengthen maternal health for generations to come.

Next Steps for SAFE Birth—VA

Phase 2 (Jan 1 to June 30, 2026):

- ❑ Establish a Faculty workgroup for initiative
- ❑ Identify a chair for this workgroup
- ❑ Establish a Technical Assistance schedule
- ❑ Identify evidence-based protocols, checklists and templates to address Urgent Maternal Warning Signs
- ❑ Establish a roster of all EDs, Free-standing EDs and Birthing Centers within Virginia, with an accurate count
- ❑ Provide survey results to hospitals
- ❑ Establish a clear timeline for this work in 2026
- ❑ Hold first monthly meeting for hospitals by June 1, 2026

If you would like to be a part of the Faculty workgroup, please reach out to Evan Issacs at evan.Isaacs@vcuhealth.org

VNPC
Virginia Neonatal
Perinatal Collaborative