



## **Doula Practice Standards for Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center (LHAAMC)**

### **Doulas for Labor and Birth Support**

The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG), the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN), and Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center (LHAAMC) endorse the inclusion of trained doulas as integral members of the care team. As part of the Luminis Health system, we are committed to fostering a safe, patient-centered environment that prioritizes quality care and collaborative delivery practices.

### **Doula's Scope of Practice at LHAAMC**

We gladly welcome trained doulas to support patients during labor and birth, offering continuous emotional, physical, and informational assistance to enhance coping and create a patient-centered birth experience. Doulas provide invaluable support to both our patients and care teams by:

- Facilitating communication between the patient and the clinical team regarding physical and/or psychosocial needs to help optimize holistic care.
- Encouraging breathing exercises and other calming techniques.
- Adhering to hospital expectations for use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and hand hygiene
- Remaining with the patient throughout the delivery (including the triage and Post-Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)) and throughout the postpartum period, based on the service agreement established between the doula and the patient prior to delivery.
- Assisting with patient self-care needs such as going to the bathroom and intrapartum position changes ***after consulting and collaborating with the clinical team.***
- Offering support to patients during cesarean deliveries upon request. During such procedures, one support person is permitted in the operating room (OR). If requested by the patient, a doula may fulfill this role, otherwise the doula may meet their client & support person in the PACU. The doula will be expected to comply with any requests from the medical team to wait outside treatment areas to facilitate patient care, if necessary.

While doulas have much to contribute to the labor, delivery, and postpartum experience, we expect that doulas **will not**:

- Provide medical care to the patient. Examples of medical care include: medication administration to patient or newborn – including herbal preparations or supplements; provide oxygen; perform cervical exams; push with laboring patient without direct direction from clinical team; remove or place fetal or uterine monitoring devices; start, stop, or silence IV pumps.

- Doulas supporting their patients during the labor and delivery process should refrain from crossing the sterile field.
- Make medical decisions for the patient.
- Initiate or change the plan of medical care.
- Offer medical advice to the healthcare staff.
- Contradict health care provider counseling or recommendations.

As is the case for all support persons at LHAAMC, doulas are not permitted to:

- Cross or touch the sterile field throughout the labor and delivery process, including any procedures performed at the bedside or in the OR.
- Be present in the OR during
  - Placement of spinal anesthesia
  - Stat c-section and/or c-section requiring general anesthesia.
  - Postpartum hemorrhage cases requiring a move to the OR
  - Twin Delivery that transitions to c-section under general anesthesia

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## Process

### **Doula Registration:**

All doulas wishing to support patients at LHAAMC are required to:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Complete a Doula Intake Form
- Upon review of the documentation, the Program Coordinator will confirm successful completion of the registration process *within four business days* via email.
- We advise that the patient and/or doula bring a copy of the approval letter to the hospital to avoid delays in doula support in case of electronic medical record lapses.
- If the patient presents for delivery prior to completion of the doula registration process, the doula may electronically complete the intake form at the time of patient admission.

### **Hospital Arrival:**

- Upon arrival to LHAAMC, please check in at the information desk. You will receive a visitor badge/name tag and will be directed to the appropriate unit. This visitor badge/name tag must be worn while in the building and returned to the front desk when you exit the building.
- Doulas play a crucial role in upholding LHAAMC's hygiene standards, following the latest infection control policies. This includes maintaining hand hygiene upon entering the hospital and with each entry and exit of the patient's room, as well as using proper personal protective equipment (PPE). Doulas must wear a face shield/eye protection during pushing/delivery. The hospital may provide appropriate PPE. When our infectious disease mitigation requirements change, based on state, CDC, or institutional

requirements, we expect doulas to comply with any measures that are implemented within our department. Visit [Visitation-LHAAMC | Luminis Health](#) for further guidelines

- When you arrive at the appropriate unit, inform the Unit Secretary of your role and the client you are providing support to. The Unit Secretary will provide further instructions.
    - Labor and Delivery Unit - 443-481-6258.
    - Postpartum Unit – 443-481-6282
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For any questions or concerns, please contact the Doula Program Coordinator at [doula@luminishealth.org](mailto:doula@luminishealth.org).