



Maintaining universal health precautions is critical in healthcare service delivery, be it in COVID-19 times or otherwise. Healthcare providers under ASMAN program (Alliance for Saving Mothers and Newborns) are specially trained in standards and protocols for infection prevention to offer safe and quality care to mothers and newborns.



## MESSAGE FROM **Dr. RAJNI WADHWA**

Head - Program Management Unit, ASMAN

### **Critical times or not, quality care is paramount at all times!**

COVID-19 has changed the world for everyone. Health systems are being tested. The importance of digitally connected tools and platforms has been highlighted. That healthcare providers are true heroes, has been revealed. When all these have been put in place and when commitment to quality, respectful and equitable care is high, we can ensure that no life is lost.

This was the philosophy with which ASMAN was born - To give respectful and quality care to every mother who is bringing a newborn into this world.

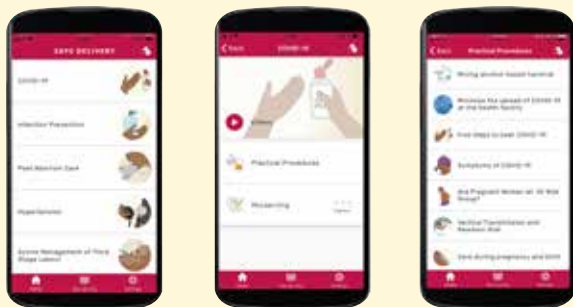
Technology in the hands of well-trained providers plays a significant role in delivering quality healthcare and its value is more evident today during COVID-19. The ASMAN app has been designed to do just that - it supports healthcare providers in decision making, even during complicated cases. Real-time guidance during complicated cases, is provided by Remote Support Center, through specialized doctors, who can view the entire case record of a pregnant woman through the ASMAN app and guide healthcare providers accordingly. This not only helps to avoid the delay in initiating

the correct treatment at the peripheral health facility but also curbs unnecessary travel for the pregnant women to a higher facility.



Everyone has risen to the COVID-19 challenge in their own way. The doctors, nurses and other staff at the ASMAN centers have been providing safe and efficient services to all mothers and newborns and have been following the COVID-19 guidelines as well.

ASMAN program has acted quickly to mitigate the effects of COVID-19. We conducted orientation programs for Chief Medical and Health Officers, District Program Managers, doctors and nurses on COVID-19, via video conferencing, in all ASMAN intervention facilities of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Over 900+ participants were trained. They found the trainings to be extremely useful and critical and the effort was also lauded by the National Health Mission representatives.



ASMAN application includes Safe Delivery App by Maternity Foundation and healthcare providers continuously use these for instant access to evidence based and up-to-date clinical guidelines on basic emergency obstetric and neonatal care. COVID-19 specific module consisting of animated video, action cards covering technical matters of managing COVID-19 positive pregnant women and infection prevention protocols has been developed based on government guidelines.

At ASMAN, we encourage the use of E-consultations through our Remote Support Centres that offer specialist support to complicated labor cases at the peripheral facilities. Recently, FOGSI along with National Neonatal Forum India & Indian Academy of Pediatrics released, 'Guidelines on Perinatal-Neonatal management of COVID-19.' One of the recommendations is continuous fetal heart rate monitoring, preferably electronically. Across ASMAN intervention facilities in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, this is being done through portable digital fetal heart rate monitor. This technology intervention allows for accurate data collection and interpretation quickly allowing healthcare providers to take obstetric decisions earlier on.

Our partners have affirmed their commitment by bringing their expertise to the challenge:

1. Bodhi Health created a resource page on COVID-19 for healthcare providers, which has the latest and up-to-date & evidence-based information, from leading global health organizations. Please visit and share it with your healthcare peers <<https://bodhihealthedu.org/covid-19-resource-page/>>
2. Real-time data aids decision making. Our partner Avalon along with Community Systems Foundation have used innovative data solutions to track the ongoing crisis in an effort to disseminate up-to-date statistics on COVID-19. By using the visualization, cases can be filtered by total number, deaths, recovered and active. Data will show countries relative to their region and the world. Read more at: <https://www.communitysystemsfoundation.org/innovations>

# COVID-19 AND PREGNANT WOMEN: GUIDANCE IS KEY

World Health Organisation (WHO), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR), Federation of Obstetric and Gynaecological Societies of India (FOGSI) and others have compiled and shared multiple guidelines for healthcare providers to manage intrapartum & postpartum cases during COVID-19 pandemic. These are critical to ensure safety of pregnant women, newborn, the healthcare providers and accompanying family members. Largely, these guidelines help healthcare providers understand and practice the following:

- Management of different stages of labour, C-Sections, breastfeeding, post-natal care, etc.
- Measures to prevent the spread
- Infrastructure, equipment, supplies related provisions, care, safety and disposal
- Care during and after discharge

You may refer to these useful resources for more information:

- WHO: Q&A on COVID-19, pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding
- Clinical Management of COVID-19 by Ministry of health and Family Welfare
- Guidance for Management of Pregnant Women in COVID-19 Pandemic
- Perinatal-Neonatal management of COVID-19 infection by FOGSI

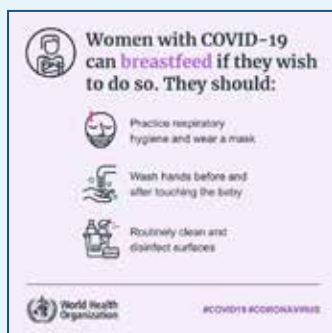


## SOME KEY GUIDANCE THAT WE WANT TO HIGHLIGHT ARE BELOW:

**All pregnant women, including those with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infections, have the right to high quality care before, during and after childbirth**

WHO states that pregnant women with symptoms of COVID-19 should be prioritized for testing. If they have COVID-19, they may need specialized care. This includes antenatal, intrapartum, newborn, postnatal and mental health care. It calls for a safe and positive childbirth experience.

### Breast Feeding Post Delivery in COVID-19 times



### COVID-19 protocols need to be followed for every delivery (Guidelines by FOGSI)

- Isolation of pregnant patients who have confirmed COVID-19 or are under investigations.
- Safe intrapartum services should be provided that require minimum staffing that can provide emergency obstetric, anesthetic and neonatal care.
- Maternal observations including temperature, respiratory rate and oxygen saturations; electronic fetal monitoring; and hourly oxygen saturation during labor should be done
- Risks and benefits of temporary separation of mother and baby should be discussed with mother and the healthcare team, an isolation room should be available for infant while they remain a PUI (Person Under Investigation).
- Consultations with obstetric, neonatal, and intensive care specialists and psychological counseling (depending on the condition of the mother) are essential.
- Caesarean sections should only be performed when medically justified. The mode of birth should be individualized and based on a woman's preferences alongside obstetric indications.
- Process to protect newborns from COVID-19 risk should be in place.
- Assessment of severity of COVID-19 symptoms, which should follow a multi-disciplinary team approach. Delivery should be preferably at a tertiary care center.

## ASMAN PROGRESS AT A GLANCE



**2,84,190**

Live births registered in ASMAN application



**1,18,290**

Notifications sent to doctors for timely case management



**18,740**

Total number of referrals facilitated through ASMAN application



**1,09,450**

High risk cases detected timely

\*As of 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2020

## FROM GROUND ZERO

### Leveraging technology to make timely and correct clinical decisions



During COVID-19 lockdown, Remote Support Centers established under ASMAN program have been very instrumental in connecting healthcare providers from peripheral facilities with specialists based at the district and state level. The healthcare providers at the peripheral facilities receive expert advice to deal with difficult cases, answer queries and confirm prognosis and treatment protocol. This has also minimized unnecessary referrals to tertiary facilities that are focused on dealing with COVID-19 patients.

### We thank our healthcare providers



Our sincere gratitude to all healthcare providers who are working relentlessly and tirelessly, to provide quality healthcare to pregnant mothers and newborns, amidst COVID-19. The pandemic continues to impact communities across the globe and it is truly inspiring to see that doctors, nurses, staff, are at the forefront, taking care of those affected by COVID-19. We continue to support them in every way we can, to ensure they have access to all that they need.

### Alliance Partners

**BILL & MELINDA GATES foundation**



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