

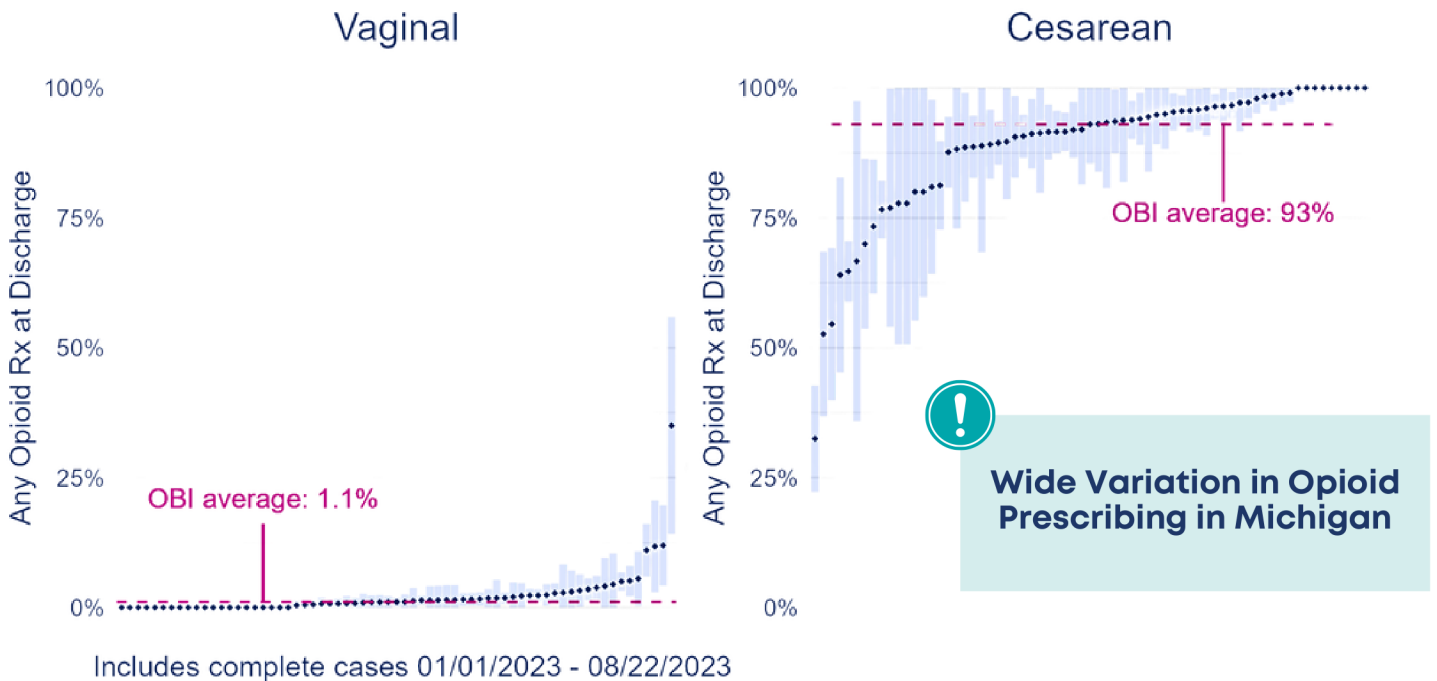
Bringing Our Patients COMFORT: Promoting Evidence-Based Pain Management After Childbirth

Helping Michigan birthing hospitals adopt new national guidelines to promote excellent postpartum pain control, reduce harmful opioid prescribing, and promote more equitable, respectful care.



THE PROBLEM

- Postpartum individuals are a critical but neglected population for opioid stewardship
- Opioid prescribing after childbirth is:
 - **Excessive:** Only 20% of prescribed opioids are consumed after cesarean
 - **Risky:** 1 in 75 people using opioids after childbirth develop new persistent opioid use
 - **Variable:** Wide variation in Michigan indicates improvement opportunity
- Significant inequities in postpartum pain management practices exist for people marginalized by racism, unmet social needs, language barriers, and substance use



THE SOLUTION

The Creating Optimal pain Management FOR Tailoring interventions after childbirth (COMFORT) Clinical Practice Guideline (CPG)

The COMFORT CPG aims to promote more respectful, equitable postpartum pain management experiences through care that is both evidence-based and tailored to individual risk factors, preferences, and values.

COMFORT Recommendations*



Provide robust **education and counseling** about pain management, risks of opioid prescribing, and risk-education



Use **scheduled non-opioid medications** (acetaminophen and NSAIDs) as first-line for postpartum pain



Offer **non-pharmacologic strategies** (e.g., heat/ice, abdominal binder, aromatherapy) to augment pain management after birth



Consider **inpatient strategies**, particularly for patients with more complex postpartum pain or who are unable to receive standard treatments



Consider **tailored opioid prescribing** through a shared decision-making process



Use a **principles-based approach** to postpartum pain management for patients with opioid use disorder, chronic pain, and other complex pain

*COMFORT CPG development included a systematic literature review, a national consensus panel of 20 inter-professional experts, and input from patients and clinicians to incorporate key considerations for promoting respectful care and equity. This CPG is meant to apply to the majority of patients, and providers should use their judgment in establishing care plans, particularly for patients with complex pain.

Bringing Our Patients COMFORT: An OBI Initiative

The Obstetrics Initiative (OBI) leads “Bringing Our Patients COMFORT,” a statewide quality improvement (QI) project to promote the adoption of the COMFORT CPG and optimize postpartum pain management.

OBI provides its 70+ member hospitals with:



Timely, credible performance data to illuminate improvement opportunities



Compelling QI resources and tailored support to overcome barriers and make change happen



Collaborative learning opportunities to inspire collective action

OBI Hospital Champions will help make clinical practice change easier with:

- COMFORT-based postpartum pain management protocols
- Electronic health record updates
- Educational resources for maternity clinicians and birthing people
- QI data reviews with clinical teams to inspire ongoing improvement

Initiative Goal



By December 2025, more than 70% of hospitals will offer COMFORT CPG-concordant care, measured by:

- $\geq 70\%$ of clinicians trained on COMFORT guideline
- $\geq 90\%$ of eligible births receive opioid-sparing postpartum pain management

Contact Us

obicustomersupport@med.umich.edu

obstetricsinitiative.org



The Obstetrics Initiative (OBI) is a statewide quality improvement collaborative that collects clinically credible data and shares best practices across over 70 hospitals, to optimize maternity care experiences, health outcomes, and equity for Michigan families. Support for OBI is provided by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan and Blue Care Network as part of the BCBSM Value Partnerships program.