Dear Physician Leads,

Even while the Coronavirus pandemic causes mass changes in personal and institutional behaviors, the opioid epidemic continues to be responsible for a much greater loss of life among our peripartum patients.

Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) is a life-threatening chronic medical condition with life-saving treatment available. The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) reported that of the 2,772 Illinois statewide drug overdose deaths in 2018, 2,167 (79%) were opioid overdose-related fatalities. Most pertinent for our work, **drug overdose now kills more pregnant/postpartum women in Illinois yearly than any other cause, including hemorrhage or hypertension combined**. Medication assisted treatment (MAT) and naloxone together can save women’s lives.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and IDPH- Illinois Maternal Morbidity and Mortality Report 2018, recommend that all pregnant women receive screening with a validated screening tool for opioid use disorder early in pregnancy care and again on delivery admission. Over a year ago, NorthShore University HealthSystem joined the Illinois Perinatal Quality Collaborative’s *Mothers and Neonates Affected by Opioids* (MNO) Initiative to achieve these goals. **We are failing to meet these goals.**

It is imperative that we screen all of our patients prenatally with a **validated** screening tool to identify all women with OUD. All providers and your offices have been provided with a validated screening tool with a detailed workflow embedded within it. Any woman who is identified with OUD is assessed by her provider and encouraged to start medication assisted treatment (MAT), referred to a recovery treatment program, tested for Hepatitis C and provided with a naloxone prescription. A robust clinical care checklist is available to guide optimal care (type **.oudchecklist** into Epic to see checklist).

**You are uniquely positioned to identify and treat women who have an opioid use disorder**.

**It is imperative that we have 100% compliance** **and screen all women with a validated screening tool early in pregnancy**.

To that end, I would like each of you to provide a written description of your office’s work flow process for insuring that all patients will be screened using a validated opioid screening tool and detail when and how those screening tools will be entered into the patients’ EPIC chart prior to delivery admission. Please complete the attached form and return to \_\_MNO-OB Team Lead\_\_ by XX/XX/XXXX

Thank you for diligently undertaking this endeavor.

Sincerely,