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## **ProMutual Group Expands Successful Patient Safety Program**

### ***Shoulder Dystocia Training Course Offered to Physicians Throughout Northeast***

Boston, Mass. – ProMutual Group, the leading provider of medical malpractice insurance in the Northeast, is expanding its successful patient safety program aimed at reducing the incidence of shoulder dystocia. Shoulder dystocia is a birth complication in which a baby’s shoulder is blocked during delivery, and occurs in just one percent to four percent of deliveries. Since it involves the lack of rapid, spontaneous delivery of the shoulder of the baby, medical professionals involved must respond immediately to free the impacted shoulder, otherwise the baby may suffer irreversible neurological injury or death.

Shoulder dystocia, long considered an obstetric emergency, is the focus of an increasing number of medical malpractice lawsuits nationwide. The reason is that many shoulder dystocias result in Erb’s palsy (paralysis of shoulder and upper arm muscles), fractures of the clavicle or humerus or even death. When permanent injury does occur, litigation is likely to ensue.

In response to this urgent medical emergency, ProMutual Group launched a program in 2004 in Massachusetts for its insured OB/GYNs, family practitioners with OB privileges and certified nurse midwives. With the expansion of this program, all OB/GYNs insured by ProMutual Group in Connecticut, New Jersey and Rhode Island, as well as ProMutual Group-insured OB/GYNs and family practitioners with OB privileges in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont, will also be eligible.

ProMutual Group initiated this patient safety program after a review of its labor and delivery claims which found that “negligent management of shoulder dystocia” is one of the most frequent and costly allegations made against obstetricians and certified nurse midwives.

“Based on the feedback we have received as a result of offering this program to OB/GYNs and certified nurse midwives in Massachusetts, we have concluded that it is an excellent course that hits all the issues that physicians have to deal with in today’s complex medical world,” said Maureen Mondor, vice president of risk management at ProMutual Group. “It just made sense to expand the program to help doctors in other states where we provide medical liability insurance.”

While there are certain factors that put a woman at increased risk for the shoulder dystocia complication, there is no way of precisely predicting this complication. Thus, it results in an obstetric emergency leaving the medical team just minutes to safely remove the infant and protect the mother’s health.

“ProMutual Group’s patient safety program helped with the care of my obstetric patients in the labor and delivery unit because it delivered a plan of response such that each and every member of my team knows exactly what his or her role is,” said Ingrid Balcomb, M.D., an OB/GYN at Emerson Hospital in Concord, Massachusetts. “It’s a fantastic program.”

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The program, which has been endorsed by the Massachusetts Chapter of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), was created by Bay State Medical Health Systems and developed into an interactive CD-ROM by Veritech Corporation. Scoring of the course's built-in test is done online by Veritech which then provides the results to ProMutual Group. Practitioners who successfully complete the exam during a policy year receive a premium credit at their next renewal.

***About ProMutual Group***

ProMutual Group insures nearly 16,000 physicians, surgeons and dentists, as well as a large number of hospitals, health centers and clinics. With over 30 years experience insuring the healthcare industry, ProMutual Group has an impressive \$1.7 billion in admitted assets, \$378 million in policyholder surplus, and \$286 million in direct written premium. The companies also proudly maintain an A- (Excellent) rating from A.M. Best, the nation's leading independent insurance rating organization. Based in Massachusetts, ProMutual Group also operates in Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Vermont.

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