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Ministry of Health,

'Suwasiripaya'

Colombo 10

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All Deputy Director Generals Ministry of Health

All Directors, Ministry of Health

All Provincial/Regional Directors of Health Services

Directors of Teaching/Provincial General Hospitals

Heads of Institutions

Neonatal Transport Service for the Western Province

Sri Lanka has had great achievements in reducing neonatal mortality over the past few decades. Now the time is optimum for the country to focus more on improving the quality of newborn care thereby further reduce neonatal morbidity and mortality.

The Maternal and Newborn Health External Review conducted in 2007 has recommended that the country should now focus on improving advance newborn care. To achieve best outcome, advance newborn care should be provided only in selected specialized centers in the country, hence there is a need to establish proper retrieval system to transport neonates in need of advance care, in optimum condition to the centers that provide advanced care. There is evidence to show that neonatal transport is best when it is carried out by trained, competent staff designated for the process.

The Ministry of Health has decided to set up a Neonatal Transport Service for the Western Province. The Neonatal Transport System pilot tested in the Lady Ridgeway Hospital from June 2013 will be extended to cover the whole of Western Province.

Administration of the transport services for the Western Province - Administration of the service will be under the Director of the Lady Ridgeway Hospital. Provision of designated Ambulance facilities and other equipment required for effective transport services eg; transport ventilators, transport incubators will be the responsibility of the Director of Lady Ridgeway Hospital.

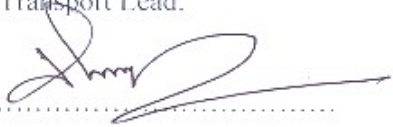
Area covered by the transport service: Neonatal transfers will be done from the hospitals in the Western Province to the Lady Ridgeway Hospital. Once the services are well established, transport will be done from the hospitals in the Western Province to other Level III hospitals in the Western Province. Back transfers also will be undertaken by the transport team from the receiving station back to the original hospital.

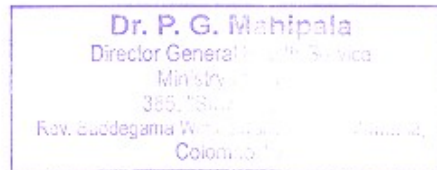
Transport Lead: The Consultant Paediatrician/Neonatologist in charge of the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit of the Lady Ridgeway Hospital will function as the Transport Lead and provide technical guidance for the neonatal transport system.

The Transport Team – The transport team would consist of doctors, nurses and ambulance driver from the Lady Ridgeway Hospital trained in neonatal retrieval one day standard training course. As at present the team will consist of trained doctors and nurses from the Neonatal Intensive Care unit of the Lady Ridgeway Hospital, Colombo. As the services expand doctors and nurses from other units of the Lady Ridgeway Hospital trained in neonatal retrieval one day standard training course also would be included in the transport team.

Provision of 24/7 services - Neonatal Transport would be a service provided throughout 24hrs of the day, all days of the week. Roster for the doctors and nurses identified for the transport team would be prepared and they have to provide transport services accordingly. Until they are called for a retrieval of a neonate, the rostered doctors and nurses can attend to routine work in their respective units.

Training of the members of the transport team The neonatal retrieval one day standard training course and refresher training for the recruited staff members will be the responsibility of the Transport Lead.


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Dr P G Maheepala,
Director General Health Services



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Additional Secretary, Medical Services
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President, Sri Lanka College of Paediatricians
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