



PERINATAL QUALITY FOUNDATION NTQR Credentialing for Physicians

Preamble:

The Perinatal Quality Foundation (formerly Maternal Fetal Medicine Foundation) recommends nuchal translucency (NT) credentialing for all physician sonologists and sonographers involved in first trimester Down Syndrome risk assessment. The Perinatal Quality Foundation is committed to NT credentialing of both members of the team, not just the person who scans, to establish a team approach and to meet the recommendations of the ACOG Practice Bulletin Number 77 titled *Screening for Fetal Chromosomal Anomalies*. Ongoing quality monitoring of both sonographers and supervising sonologists helps insure that patients receive the most accurate first trimester risk assessment possible.

Perinatal Quality Foundation Guidelines for Physician Credentialing:

Credentialing for physician participants in the NTQR program requires didactic education, successful completion of a written examination, and evidence of image proficiency.

In many practices sonographers perform the technical acquisition of the NT image. The supervising physician performs the medical management and decision-making including program development, patient counseling, verification of measurement accuracy, and explanation of results and diagnostic options. In recognition of these different roles the NTQR program has outlined the educational and image proficiency requirements for physicians.

1) Didactic Evaluation

- A. All supervising physicians must take a didactic course and pass a written examination that demonstrates their ability to perform and supervise first trimester Down Syndrome risk assessment.
- B. Successful completion of the exam will require didactic knowledge of the principals of first trimester risk assessment as well as confirmation of the ability of the examinee to identify appropriately performed NT images that meet the guidelines for image quality.

2) Image Submission

- A. If in practice a physician will be independently acquiring images for NT risk assessment, then the physician must obtain the images submitted for credentialing.
- B. If in practice the physician does not perform image acquisition then:
 - i. Images sent in for credentialing review must be acquired under direct supervision of the physician. This requires that the physician be present in the room during the complete acquisition of the images and personally supervise the acquisition and selection of submitted images.
 - ii. Submitted images must not have been previously used for credentialing by any one else.
- C. When submitting images for review, physicians must attest that the acquisition of the images meet the NTQR criteria listed above.

The Perinatal Quality Foundation is a 501(c) (3) non-profit entity. The Nuchal Translucency Oversight Committee of the Perinatal Quality Foundation developed this practice bulletin. The information is designed to aid practitioners in making decisions about appropriate maternal fetal care. These guidelines should not be construed as dictating an exclusive course of treatment or procedure. Variations in practice may be warranted based on the needs of the individual patient, resources, and limitations unique to the institution or type of practice.