

Resolution 11.14.02

Resolution on Early Hospital Discharge of Mothers and Newborns

Whereas, the first few days of an infant’s life represent a crucial transition time for both baby and parents.

Whereas, many infant and maternal health problems and other risk factors for abuse and neglect are not apparent in the first 24 hours after birth.

Whereas, many new mothers, who may be at higher risk of abusing or neglecting their children, may have no support or help when they return home.

Whereas, short hospital stays do not allow mothers any time to recuperate from the stress of labor.

Whereas, health insurers encourage health care professionals to discharge mothers and newborns as soon as possible.¹

Therefore, be it resolved, that PCA America supports:

Guaranteeing a minimum length-of-stay in the hospital of 48 hours for a vaginal birth and 96 hours for a Caesarean.²

Allowing parents and their doctors to determine the length of stay and postpartum visits, based on the health and stability of the baby and mother as well as the parent’s confidence and ability to care for the child and not predominately by economic considerations.

Prohibiting insurers from offering financial disincentives to any attending provider who orders care consistent with the above recommendations.

While at the hospital, ensuring that an opportunity is provided for parent support services, such as home visiting programs, to reach out to new parents to promote positive parenting, to encourage child health and development, and to prevent child abuse and neglect.

¹ The Newborn’s and Mother’s Health Protection Act of 1996 (Public Law 104204). Incorporated into the VA-HUD appropriations bill for the fiscal year 1997, it requires most managed care plans to cover hospital stays of 48 hours for vaginal births and 96 hours for Caesarian sections.

² American Academy of Pediatricians, *Pediatric Policy Reference Guide 1995*.