

Home health visits in the early postpartum period

Summary

Objectives: To estimate the value of home health visits in the early postpartum period in Estonia by analysing the available evidence, health service use and related costs.

Methods: A literature review in PubMed database and clinical guidelines was carried out for effectiveness of early home health visits and evidence on cost-effectiveness. Budget impact calculation were performed for implementing this service in Estonia.

Results: According to guidelines and current practices, proactive home health visit of a newborn is implemented in most developed countries. It is perceived to be an important tool to identify health risks of the baby as well as of the household. Home health visits are carried out by health nurses or midwives. The aim of home health visit is to ensure best advice and support to the mother about caring and breastfeeding the newborn.

There are very few controlled studies on efficacy and cost-effectiveness of home health visits as compared to visits to the doctors office or hospital. However, there is a wide consensus, that home health visits should be carried out in case of early hospital discharge and for follow-up of women having cesarean birth.

Conclusions: It is proposed to develop a system of early home health visits in Estonia in order visit most of first-time mothers and selected cases of recurrent childbirth. The need for the home visit should be assessed and documented formally using appropriate methodologies and instruments. The postpartum home health visits should be carried out by a health nurse or midwife, who is skilled and experienced in maternal and newborn care.

Citation: Saare L, Arusaar V, Kalda R, Kiivet R-A. *Sünnijärgse koduvisiidi mõju hindamine*. Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli peremeditsiini ja rahvatervishoiu instituut; 2019.