

NAHAM and THSA Unite to Standardize Newborn Naming Recommended by AHIMA

National Standard for Naming Newborns Seeks to Eliminate Preventable Medical Errors and Protect the Tiniest Patients from Day One

DALLAS, TX, UNITED STATES, April 29, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- In a major milestone for infant patient safety and health information exchange, the National Association of Healthcare Access Management (NAHAM) and the

Texas Health Services Authority (THSA) have adopted a standardized newborn naming convention recommended in 2023 by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA).



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“The endorsement of AHIMA's naming guidance by NAHAM demonstrates that access professionals, health information leaders, and clinicians can work together to improve care,” said Joel Banazek, NAHAM Board Member and Chair of NAHAM's Policy Development and Government Relations Committee. “Naming might seem like a small thing, but for newborns, it can make the difference between life and loss.”

Below is the standardized naming convention approved by the organizations:

Singleton Births:

- Girl Katherine Miller-Smith
- Boy Katherine Miller-Smith
- Baby Katherine Miller-Smith

Multiple Births:

- Boy1 Katherine Miller-Smith
- Girl2 Katherine Miller-Smith

- Girl13 Katherine Miller-Smith

The standardized guidance builds on NAHAM's 2016 and AHIMA's 2023 approaches by:

- Creating a unique first name by joining the infant's sex with the mother's first name (e.g., "GirlKatherine Miller-Smith") and eliminating "Baby" except if the sex is unknown;
- Eliminating middle names, often misused or inconsistently entered in EMR systems and health information exchange;
- Using numbers instead of letters for multiples, based on birth order (e.g., "Boy1Katherine Miller-Smith), as numbers are much more unique and distinctive.

The standardization efforts were catalyzed in Texas, in which a baby with a positive newborn screening disease result couldn't be matched to their results in another EMR, nearly delaying needed care. Hospitals use their own approaches to newborn naming. In one survey, 73 hospitals used 13 different approaches; a 2025 survey of 27 hospitals found 23 different approaches for naming twins. Nearly two newborn misidentification events occur daily and approximately 11% of medical errors among newborns were linked to misidentification, including placing orders on the wrong baby's chart, especially when names are similar or truncated due to wristband character limits. Additionally, inconsistent naming causes failure to match records across EMRs. Clinicians often struggle to retrieve birth records or newborn screening results. By standardizing naming, it becomes much easier to facilitate matching.

"This standardized naming policy is more than a technical fix—it's a human commitment to safeguarding our newborns from their very first moment of life," said Jennifer Mueller, MBA, RHIA, SHIMSS, FACHE, FAHIMA, FACHDM, AHIMA Senior Vice President, Health Information Career Advancement.

"The next step will be the distribution of an implementation guide to provide the rationale and best practices for adoption nationwide," said Dr. Joseph Schneider, Chair of the THSA Collaborative's Newborn Informatics and Pediatrician at the University of Texas Southwestern. Katherine Lusk, THSA's Vice

President of Strategic Partnerships, added that "several major EMR vendors have already signaled support for the unified approach". Hospitals, clinicians, organizations, and EMR vendors wishing to join this effort are encouraged to reach out to the organizations below.

About NAHAM (info@naham.org | www.naham.org). The National Association of Healthcare Access Management is the leading organization focused on promoting excellence in the patient access profession through education, certification, and collaboration.

About AHIMA (media@ahima.org | www.ahima.org). The American Health Information

Management Association is a global nonprofit association of health information professionals advocating for the ethical and effective use of health data.

About THSA (info@thsa.org | www.thsa.org). The Texas Health Services Authority is a public-private partnership with the State of Texas established in 2007 by the Texas Legislature. THSA facilitates a multi-disciplinary vendor agnostic interoperability Collaborative with 100+ Texas healthcare organizations working on HIT standardization. The Collaborative's Newborn Informatics Workgroup includes stakeholders from public health, neonatology, medical informatics, and IT vendors.

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