

This is a printer friendly version of an article from **chillicothe gazette.com**
To print this article open the file menu and choose Print.

[Back](#)

Article published Jan 31, 2008

More infants staying with moms

Docs consulting with Columbus via video link; fewer babies transported for treatment

By LOREN GENSON
Gazette Staff Writer

Chillicothe resident Kellie Donahue was separated from her baby after undergoing a C-section at Adena Regional Medical Center.

Although baby Owen was transported to Columbus for emergency care at Nationwide Children's Hospital, Kellie was able to see him live and see what specialists in Columbus told her about his health thanks to new telemedicine equipment linking the two hospitals.

"I was able to see him on the screen and see what his doctors were doing," she said.

For the new mother, it was reassuring, especially because she wasn't able to leave the hospital as she recovered. The technology also can be used by Adena doctors to show specialists in Columbus X-ray and other test results, along with a live video of a baby who may need more involved medical attention.

"We used to do this kind of thing over the phone and then fax the test results which were not very clear," said Dr. John Fortney, medical care director for Adena Health System.

The new service was brought to Adena in 2007 through the Ohio Supercomputer Center. The center recently was paired with the NextGen Network, a new state and local government system being developed under Gov. Ted Strickland's administration.

"The entire project was funded with grants, so it hasn't cost anything extra," Fortney said.

Medical staff at Nationwide Children's Hospital can adjust their camera to zoom in and out on the littlest patients, getting a close-up, high-resolution and high-definition image.

"Adena can keep babies that don't need to be transmitted, because the last thing you want to after the birth is separate the family," said Dr. Rachel Brown, attending neonatologist at Nationwide.

In fact, since the technology was implemented, Adena already has seen a decrease in the number of babies transported. When conversing with specialists over the phone, if there was any uncertainty, the baby would be transported, but now, with digital test results and a clear live view of the baby, it's easier for specialists to allow the patient to stay at Adena, said Jackie Stansberry, director of Women and Children's Services.

"Our neonatal transport (for 2007) is half of what it was in 2006," Stansberry said. "So we can really see it making a difference."

The technology is fairly new, and Adena is so far the only partner with Nationwide Children's Hospital. However, Fortney said, as the technology comes down in cost, he believes it will be used in many more hospitals.

"Although it is expensive right now, it just keeps getting more and more in tune," Fortney said. "As the cost comes down I think you'll see more and more of this throughout the area."
