MAKE IT SAFE TO BE A MOM IN TEXAS

Welcoming a new child should be a time of celebration and joy. Yet for too many Texas women, the journey to motherhood carries excessive risk of complications and death.

Compared to other high-income countries, women in the U.S. are more likely to die from pregnancy or childbirth-related complications. According to new findings from Texas’ panel of maternal health experts, deaths during pregnancy or the year following delivery are too common in our state, with 89% of these maternal deaths classified as preventable. For every maternal death, 50 to 100 additional mothers suffer a severe illness or complication.

Why Does Comprehensive Coverage Matter?
- Healthy pregnancies begin in the years before pregnancy with early identification, treatment, and management of other health conditions, like diabetes and hypertension.
- Once a woman is pregnant, managing a chronic condition is costlier and more challenging.
- Ongoing care during the year following delivery – also called the “fourth trimester” – is needed for conditions or complications that might arise.
- Chronic diseases and lack of health insurance concentrate in communities of color and low-wealth communities. States that have extended Medicaid to working-age women have seen reductions in maternal complications and deaths. Those states are on their way to correcting inequities in maternal health outcomes by race/ethnicity and economic status.

What’s Missing in Texas?
- Pregnancy Medicaid’s comprehensive coverage ends 60 days postpartum, coinciding with the timeframe in which nearly 1 in 3 maternal deaths occurs.
- The state’s women’s health programs – Family Planning Program (FPP), Healthy Texas Women (HTW), and the newly-launched HTW Plus – fill important gaps but carry limited benefits. Women with multiple complex conditions will not get the recommended care they need.
- Pre-pandemic, 25% of Texas working-age women lacked health insurance – a number that almost certainly has grown due to pandemic-related job loss.

Ensuring comprehensive health coverage for women of reproductive age is the key step the Texas legislature can – and must – take to improve maternal health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Texas Maternal Mortality Ratio</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>18.9 deaths per 100,000 live births</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>20.7 deaths per 100,000 live births</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>18.1 deaths per 100,000 live births</td>
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Black women in Texas account for 31% of maternal deaths but only 11% of births.


1. Extend comprehensive coverage to low-income uninsured working-age adults.
2. Provide 12 months comprehensive postpartum coverage.
3. Maintain robust funding for Texas’ women’s health programs.
4. Preserve funding for TexasAIM, a state-run collaborative with hospitals, physicians, and nurses to advance the adoption of proven maternal safety protocols.
5. Reduce health inequality by screening, connecting, and coordinating care across medical and social domains throughout a woman’s lifespan.

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The Texas Public Health Coalition is a coalition of health professional organizations and health-focused organizations dedicated to disease prevention and health promotion.

MEMBERS

Alzheimer’s Association
American Heart Association
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas
Children’s Hospital Association of Texas
The Cooper Institute
Harris County Public Health
The Immunization Partnership
It’s Time Texas
March of Dimes
Methodist Healthcare Ministries
Texas Academy of Family Physicians
Texas Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Texas Academy of Physician Assistants
Texas Association of City & County Health Officials
Texas Association of Community Health Centers
Texas Chapter of the American College of Physicians Services
Texas eHealth Alliance
Texas Health Institute
Texas Hospital Association
Texas Medical Association
Texas Nurses Association
Texas Oral Health Coalition, Inc.
Texas Osteopathic Medical Association
Texas Pediatric Society
Texas Physicians for Social Responsibility
Texas Public Health Association
Texas Renal Coalition
Texas School Nurses Organization
Texas State Alliance of YMCAs
United Ways of Texas

RESOURCES

CANCER PREVENTION AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TEXAS
MD ANDERSON CANCER CENTER
MICHAEL AND SUSAN DELL CENTER FOR HEALTHY LIVING
PARTNERSHIP FOR A HEALTHY TEXAS
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES