



## **Syphilis Cases on the Rise in Ohio**

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Recent alerts from both the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (AAP) underscore a concerning national surge in congenital syphilis cases, including in Ohio. **Total syphilis cases in the state have grown by 276%, climbing from 1,923 cases in 2018 to 5,306 cases in 2021.**

***Congenital Syphilis (CS) cases in Ohio have increased from 22 cases in 2018 to 93 cases in 2022, a spike of 423%.***

The implications of congenital syphilis are severe, potentially leading to a spectrum of medical conditions such as low birth weight, long bone deformities, developmental delays, prematurity, miscarriage, stillbirth and tragically, death.

“There are some key steps that healthcare providers can take to help reverse rising syphilis cases in Ohio,” said Ohio Department of Health (ODH) Director Bruce Vanderhoff, M.D., MBA. **“Implement third trimester screening for syphilis for pregnant individuals as a standard of care to prevent congenital syphilis.”** While Ohio law mandates syphilis screening at the first prenatal visit, it may not be sufficient for those at increased risk. *It is recommended that pregnant individuals be screened again at 28 weeks’ gestation to identify and treat syphilis prior to delivery to prevent congenital syphilis, and a final syphilis screening should be conducted at delivery.*



Starting January 2024, join OPQC and the [EMPOWER Project](#) for the **“Together for Better Care”** webinar series.

These monthly webinars will highlight practical strategies to address the stigma surrounding opioid use disorder (OUD), approaches to



promote breastfeeding for mothers navigating OUD challenges, how to improve access and distribution of Narcan and the need for continued support in the postpartum period. This team effort by OPQC and the EMPOWER Project is designed to foster a supportive and informed community dedicated to the well-being of perinatal people with OUD and their newborns.

**Scan QR code  
to register for our  
upcoming webinars**



**OPQC at the CDC-Sponsored National  
Network of Perinatal Quality  
Collaboratives Annual Meeting**

**Representatives from OPQC attended the National Network of Perinatal Quality Collaboratives Annual meeting, sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), held in Denver, Colorado, December 5th and 6th.**





Marilyn Kasica, M.D., MPH, Executive Director, New York State Perinatal Quality Collaborative; Stacy Scott, Ph.D., co-chair Ohio Collaborative to Prevent Infant Mortality, Executive Director Baby 1<sup>st</sup> Network of Ohio and VP of Health Equity Innovation, National Institute of Children's Health Quality (NICHQ); Zsakeba Henderson, M.D., MPH, Senior Health Advisor, NICHQ; and Carole Lannon, M.D., MPH, Collaborative Science Lead, Ohio Perinatal Quality Collaborative.

**Carole Lannon, M.D., MPH**, presented in the opening plenary session, "*Resources for Addressing Perinatal Mental Health*." During this session, she shared insights from [The American Board of Pediatrics Roadmap Project](#), which focuses on addressing emotional health in parents.

**Susan Ford MSN, PNP** and **Nichole Nidey Ph.D** presented in a breakout session, "*Substance Use Disorder Initiatives*" with representatives from the CDC and the Colorado Perinatal Care Quality Collaborative. They discussed strategies to improve care and outcomes for perinatal patients with substance use disorders. "As we navigate challenges and continue efforts to improve perinatal care, we know that, together, we can make a positive impact on the health and well-being of our community," noted Dr. Nidey.

## OPQC at the ACOG, Ohio Section Annual Meeting

Drs. Kamilah Dixon and Mona Prasad will provide an update about current OPQC activities at the **ACOG, Ohio Section Annual Meeting on December 7.**



## OPQC at the IHI Annual Forum

**The Institute for Healthcare will host an invitational meeting *December 11* at its annual Forum: “Effective Approaches to Reduce Postpartum Morbidity and Mortality,”** with a focus on health equity.

OPQC is humbled to be one of two state PQCs asked to participate. Dr. Kamilah Dixon of OSU, lead faculty for the [OPQC Compassionate, Accountable, Respectful, and Equitable \(CARE\) Project](#) and Health Equity Lead for the [Maternal Safety Quality Improvement Project](#), and Dr. Carole Lannon will represent OPQC.

Ohio Perinatal Quality Collaborative



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