



November Newsletter

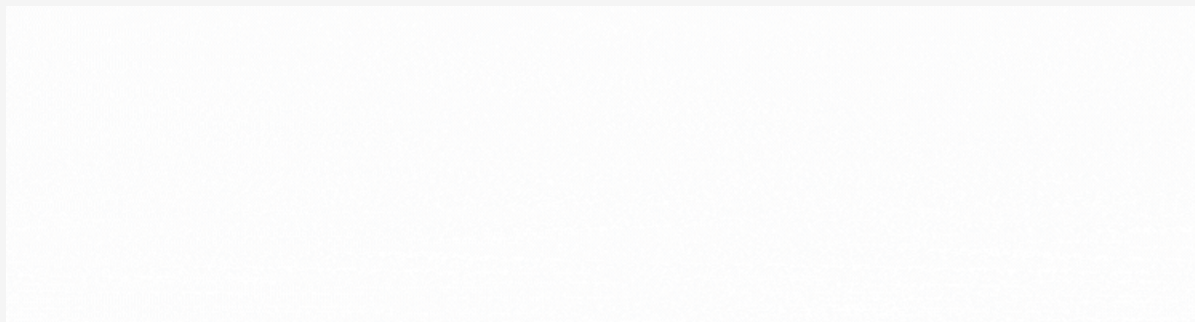
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During this month – World Prematurity Month – we take this time to recognize the work of our partners and the community to help improve maternal and infant birth outcomes in Ohio. While we acknowledge this work, we are reminded that we still have much to do to save the lives of Ohio mothers and infants and close the health equity gaps that contribute to maternal and infant deaths in the communities we serve.

According to the recently released **2022 March of Dimes (MOD) report card**, in 2021, there were **13,737 preterm** births in Ohio; that means **1 in 10 babies** (10.6% of live births) was born preterm in Ohio; earning Ohio a D+ on the 2022 MOD report card.



“Although these numbers may be discouraging, this is also a wakeup call that we can't get complacent and need to see what other strategies we can employ to change these outcomes,” stated Kamilah Dixon, MD, MA, Vice Chair of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center.

Further, the report indicates the health equity gap in our healthcare system is a significant contributor to this crisis. The MOD 2022 Report Card notes that in Ohio, the preterm rate among **Black women is 51% higher** than the rate among all other women.



PRETERM BIRTH RATE BY RACE AND ETHNICITY

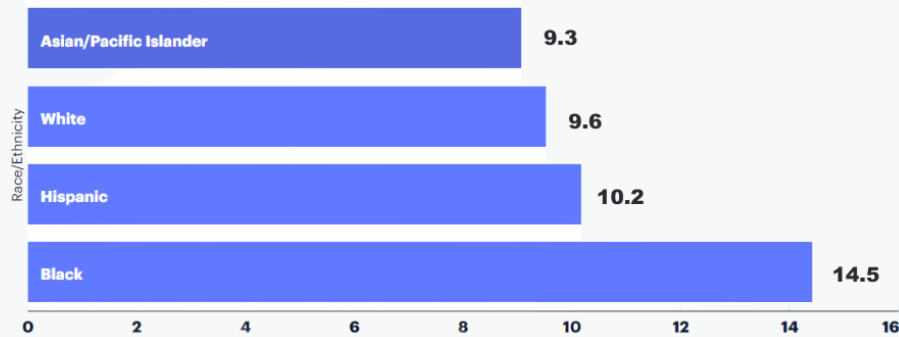
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Disparity Ratio

No Improvement

Change from baseline

Percentage of live births in 2019-2021 (average) born preterm



Prematurity is the Leading Cause of Death for Infants in Ohio

Research notes that preterm birth and its complications are the largest contributors to infant death in the United States. Ohio is no different. The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) recently released the **most current state data on infant mortality** with its annual report. This report outlines infant mortality rates by a number of different measures including geography, race, ethnicity, and cause of death. The report states the leading causes of death for all infants in the state is **prematurity-related conditions**. In addition, racial disparities exist in the top causes of death. Compared to white babies, black babies were **over three times** more likely to die from prematurity related conditions.

Just as telling is the data from the **2022 March of Dimes report card**, indicating when causes of death related to preterm birth are grouped together, pre-term related causes account for the leading cause of infant deaths - **38.5%** of infant deaths in Ohio.

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Maternal HealthCARE Collaborative to Advance Racial Equity

The national March of Dimes has highlighted that the United States is in the midst of a maternal health crisis, with Black people being three- to four-times more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications within a year of childbirth than their white counterparts.

Addressing the health equity gap is critical to supporting maternal and infant health among Black families.



As part of its efforts to improve maternal and infant birth outcomes among Black mothers and infants, the March of Dimes and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), with an investment from United Healthcare Community & State, is piloting the **Maternal HealthCARE Project** with a small number of maternity care teams in Ohio and Tennessee. One of the participating sites, the women's health leadership team at OhioHealth Grant Medical Center, noted:

"The women's health leadership team at OhioHealth Grant Medical Center is honored to collaborate on the Maternal



HealthCARE Project; focusing on racial equities and the birthing process for all. We recognize the gap that exists in maternal outcomes for black birthing people and look forward to implementing processes that address these disparities. We aim to provide a safe place for all patients that we serve.”

Our work continues And we thank all OPQC colleagues for your frontline efforts every day to improve care and outcomes for moms, babies, and families! We look forward to learning from this pilot program in the future.

Pregnancy Risk Assessment Form ****UPDATE****



The Ohio Department of Medicaid’s Pregnancy Risk Assessment Form (PRAF) has a new platform and email address!

Momsandbabies@medicaid.ohio.gov replaces progesterone_pip@medicaid.ohio.gov.

In addition, the PRAF manual and videos have been updated to reflect the change in how users get access and log into PRAF 2.0.

Access the updated manual here:

<https://progesterone.nurtureohio.com/media/PRAFProviderUserGuide10-1-22.pdf>

Access updated YouTube videos here: [NurtureOhio Support - YouTube](#)

Thank you for Making a Difference

Thank you for your commitment to making a difference and continuing to support mothers, children and families. The last three years tested our resolve and yet, through it all - our health practitioners and those who support healthcare remained centered on meeting the needs of families. We are grateful for you and the work you do every day.

We wish you and your families a restful and wonderful Thanksgiving holiday.

Ohio Perinatal Quality Collaborative | www.opqc.net

