

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a little over a month since our Maternal Mortality Summit and on behalf of the planning committee, we want to sincerely thank you for investing your time and passion on these efforts. We have been inspired by you, the thought leaders, that gathered together to improve the outcomes for our mothers in Louisiana.

As you know, between 2011-2016 the maternal mortality rate in Louisiana increased by a rate higher than that of the United States, with hypertension and hemorrhage being the two leading causes of maternal death. We certainly took notice that 45% of those deaths were deemed to be preventable as well as the alarming data showing that black women are 4 times more likely to die than white women. These facts were the focus of much discussion for the summit and the catalyst for change.

You all made many suggestions for improvement in the breakout sessions. We at the Louisiana Department of Health are currently working on the following items based on those recommendations:

1. ***Strengthen the system of maternity care by updating Louisiana's Maternal Levels of Care***
 - All women who are pregnant or have a baby in Louisiana's birthing facilities should have confidence that Louisiana has ready providers, ready facilities, ready systems – all ready for safe birth. As such, we are developing a process to update Louisiana's maternal levels of care to be consistent with national guidelines.
2. ***Implement standardized maternal safety bundles in all birthing centers***
 - By implementing standardized maternal safety bundles, particularly for hemorrhage and hypertension, all birthing facilities will be better prepared for early recognition and treatment for diagnoses that contribute to severe maternal morbidity. By updating the maternal levels of care, all birthing facilities will be required to implement these safety bundles and participate in the Louisiana Perinatal Quality Collaborative (LaPQC).
3. ***Redesign maternity care***
 - As identified during the summit, the postpartum period is a vulnerable time for new mothers and an area of opportunity to redesign how we deliver care. We know from the Louisiana Maternal Mortality Review, 62% of our mother's that experienced a death had Medicaid. Additionally, we know that almost half of the maternal deaths occurred in the postpartum period. As such, we are working to ensure that mothers, specifically those with Medicaid, are allowed nurse home visits in the postpartum period.
4. ***Improve visibility of the work of the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) to improve maternal outcomes***
 - To better inform patients, providers, facilities, and our community, over the next 3 months, we will be redesigning the LaPQC website
 - We have created a new webpage as part of the LDH website to reach a larger audience. You can access this site [here](#).

Thanks again for everyone's time and energy here. We are looking forward to all the great work to come. We plan on keeping in touch as we move on these recommendations, so be sure to look for future updates from us.

Sincerely,
The Summit Planning Team