

United States



*Merck for Mothers** is Merck's 10-year, \$500 million initiative that applies Merck's scientific and business expertise – as well as its financial resources and experience in taking on tough global healthcare challenges – to reduce preventable maternal mortality worldwide. *Merck for Mothers* is catalyzing transformative solutions to improve the quality of care women receive in health facilities at the time of childbirth and improving access to quality modern contraceptives.

Maternal Mortality in the United States

Maternal mortality is on the rise in the U.S., even as it is declining globally.ⁱ In fact, the U.S. is one of very few wealthy countries where the problem is getting worse, ranking 46th worldwide.ⁱⁱ In addition to the tragic deaths that occur during pregnancy and childbirth, more than 60,000 women per year — approximately one every ten minutes — nearly die from complications of pregnancy or childbirth.ⁱⁱⁱ

Programs and Partners

With funding from *Merck for Mothers*, our partners are collaborating with states, hospitals and local health organizations in 16 states to make pregnancy and childbirth safer.

Improving the quality of maternity care

- **American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists - District II (ACOG District II) (Project State: New York)** is working with more than 10,000 healthcare providers and approximately 120 birthing facilities to develop and implement standard approaches for handling three of the most common childbirth emergencies: hemorrhage (severe bleeding), venous thromboembolism (blood clots), and severe hypertension (high blood pressure).
- **Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) (Project Regions: District of Columbia, Georgia, New Jersey)** is working with nearly 60 hospitals to assess and improve clinicians' ability to recognize women at the greatest risk of postpartum hemorrhage (severe bleeding). The goal is to ensure that health providers can respond quickly and appropriately – using evidence-based guidelines and training – to warning signs of serious complications.
- **Association of Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) (Project Regions: Georgia, New Jersey)** is standardizing the education nurses receive and the information they communicate to new mothers regarding the warning signs of potentially life threatening postpartum complications.
- **The California Maternal Quality Care Collaborative (CMQCC) (Project State: California)** is collaborating with more than 120 hospitals in the state to put in place evidence-based practices for managing obstetric hemorrhage and preeclampsia.

Collecting better data to understand why maternal deaths and morbidities are occurring

- **Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP) (Project States: Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Missouri, North Carolina, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Utah)** helped states strengthen their ability to review maternal deaths and understand why they are occurring. Early results have identified a need for state departments of health to focus more intently on chronic conditions like hypertension, cardiovascular disease, substance abuse, and mental health problem among pregnant women.
- **The Centers for Disease Control Foundation (Project Regions: Nationwide)** is standardizing how states report on maternal deaths, with the goal of publishing the nation's first multi-state report on maternal mortality.
- **The Fund for Public Health of New York (Project City: New York, New York)** recently completed the first-ever citywide investigation of the cost and prevalence of severe maternal morbidity.

Pioneering community initiatives to help women struggling with chronic health problems

- **Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers (Project City: Camden, New Jersey)** is working with all women of reproductive age in Camden, using community health workers to support women's reproductive life planning and ensure they receive both prenatal and primary care.
- **Maternity Care Coalition (Project City: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)** is implementing a home visiting program where community health workers, who serve as both patient advocates and birth doulas, support women throughout their pregnancy.
- **Northern Manhattan Perinatal Partnership (Project City: New York, New York)** is using a specialized curriculum to educate pregnant and recently postpartum women about managing their chronic conditions and supporting them with reproductive life planning.

For more information on our efforts, visit: www.merckformothers.com



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ⁱ WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank. "Trends in Maternal Mortality 1990-2015." http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/194254/1/9789241565141_eng.pdf?ua=1

ⁱⁱ Ibid.

ⁱⁱⁱ Creanga, AA, Berg, CJ, Ko, JY, Farr, SL, Tong, VT, Bruce, FC, Callaghan, WM. Maternal mortality and morbidity in the United States: Where Are We Now? *Journal of Women's Health* (Larchmt). 2014 Jan;23(1):3-9. doi: 10.1089/jwh.2013.4617.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3880915/>