Kansas Maternal Mortality Review Committee

PREGNANCY-ASSOCIATED DEATHS

A pregnancy-associated death refers to the death of a woman while pregnant or anytime within one year of pregnancy regardless of cause.

The Kansas Maternal Mortality Review Committee (KMMRC) determines whether the deaths were also pregnancy-related and if they were preventable, developing statewide recommendations for actions to prevent future maternal deaths.

Pregnancy-Associated Deaths: Three Distinctions

From 2016 to 2022, the KMMRC identified 195 deaths in Kansas (regardless of residency), of which 153 (78.5%) were determined to be pregnancy-associated.

1 **Pregnancy-related death** refers to the death of a woman during pregnancy or within one year of the end of pregnancy from a pregnancy complication, a chain of events initiated by pregnancy, or the aggravation of an unrelated condition by the physiologic effects of pregnancy.

48 deaths (31.4%) were pregnancy-related

2 A **pregnancy-associated but not -related death** refers to the death of a woman while pregnant or anytime within one year of pregnancy, regardless of cause.

75 deaths (49.0%) were pregnancy-associated, but not -related

3 **Pregnancy-associated but unable to determine pregnancy-relatedness** refers to the death of a woman while pregnant or within one year of pregnancy, due to a cause that could not be determined as pregnancy-related or not pregnancy-related.

30 deaths (19.6%) were pregnancy-associated but unable to determine pregnancy-relatedness

107 (69.9%) of the 153 pregnancy-associated deaths occurred during the postpartum period.

Leading Causes of Pregnancy-Associated Death

- 29 (**19%**) Motor vehicle crashes
- 23 (**15%**) Cardiovascular conditions (including hypertensive disorders)
- 18 (**11.8%**) Mental health conditions (including those contributing to suicide)
- 15 (**9.8**)% Homicide
- 14 (**9.2**)% Unintentional poisoning/ overdose

47 deaths (30.7%) of all pregnancy associated deaths were caused by homicide, suicide, mental health conditions, or unintentional poisoning/overdose

KMMRC Determination of Circumstances Surrounding Pregnancy-Associated Death

Contributions to the 153 pregnancy-associated deaths:

23.5%
Obesity
(36 deaths)

30.7%
Substance use disorder
(47 deaths)

**Of these, 32 deaths, 68.1%, also had co-occurring mental health conditions*

24.8%
Mental health conditions
(38 deaths)

10.8%
Discrimination
(11 deaths)

**Of the deaths reviewed after the CDC added a discrimination field to the Committee Decisions Form on May 29, 2022*

While we took steps to minimize risk of identifying women, families and communities may recognize a death in our data, and we hope that it is viewed as honoring their lives through the potential opportunities for preventing future deaths.

Kansas Department of Health and Environment

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