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Contact: Brandon Cwalina, ra-pwdhspressoffice@pa.gov

Shapiro Administration Releases ‘Healthy Moms, Vibrant Futures’ Maternal Health Strategic Action Plan, Highlights Efforts to Improve Maternal Health, Reduce Maternal Mortality in Pennsylvania

Shapiro Administration releases a new multi-agency strategic action plan to improve health outcomes for mothers and increase access to maternal health care.



Harrisburg, PA – Today, the **Shapiro Administration** unveiled the Pennsylvania’s [Maternal Health Strategic Action Plan](#), entitled Healthy Moms, Vibrant Futures. The comprehensive multi-agency plan is the first in Pennsylvania and contains strategic goals, data and research, ongoing work, and recommendations to combat maternal health disparities that can shape quality of life for both mothers and their children.

Since taking office, **Governor Josh Shapiro** has prioritized reducing maternal health disparities and investing in healthier lives for mothers and children. Since January 2023, the Shapiro Administration has invested more than **\$12.3 million** in maternal and child health initiatives that are delivering real results, like increased postpartum depression screenings, improved access to care for women, and new grants specifically designed to improve the health of Pennsylvania mothers and babies. Governor Shapiro’s 2026-27 budget proposal includes an additional **\$7.5 million** for the Department of Health to continue this important work to make pregnancies, deliveries, and postpartum care safer.

The Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) launched the Plan along with members of the Governor's Commission on Women and leaders from the Pennsylvania General Assembly, as well as maternal health advocates.

"We know that Black women are much more likely to die from a pregnancy-related condition – and we know that nearly all of those deaths are preventable," said **Second Lady Blayre Holmes Davis**. "These aren't just statistics or numbers – these are real women who should still be alive, who should be at home taking care of their child. It's important that we don't forget these women. We owe it to them to take action – and that's what the Shapiro-Davis Administration is doing."

"Pregnancy, childbirth, and welcoming a new baby are exciting but often stressful times for parents. Tragically, for too many women – and Black women especially – having a child can be life-threatening if they cannot access high quality care and parenting supports during and after their pregnancy," said **Human Services Secretary Val Arkoosh**. "The Shapiro Administration is committed to reversing trends of maternal mortality and promoting good health for both mothers and children throughout their lives, and Healthy Moms, Vibrant Futures gives us a roadmap for this work. I am grateful for the perspectives and experiences shared with us that helped shaped this plan and our work, and we are committed to building a better future for mothers and their families."

Healthy Moms, Vibrant Futures was developed collaboratively by the departments of Health, Human Services, Drug and Alcohol Programs, and Insurance along with the Black Maternal Health Caucus and insight from over 80 maternal and family health stakeholders across Pennsylvania. The Shapiro Administration hosted 16 roundtable discussions and conducted a statewide survey to listen to the needs and experiences of women, providers, health systems, stakeholders, and other organizations that share the goal of reducing maternal mortality and morbidity.

Through the survey and listening session conversations, the plan was developed, centering on five specific maternal health priorities:

- Improving detection and treatment of behavioral health conditions, including both mental health and substance use disorders;
- Improving coordination and access to care in rural areas and maternity care deserts;
- Increasing access to high-quality care;
- Integrating initiatives to address health-related social needs into health care; and,
- Expanding and diversifying the maternal health workforce.

In addition to these strategies, the plan focuses on reducing inequities in prenatal and postpartum care and parenting supports. Equity is outlined as a core tenet of the plan to address racial disparities in pregnancy-related deaths. According to the [Pennsylvania Maternal Mortality Review](#) Committee report, in 2021, African American or Black mothers were two times more likely to die of a pregnancy-related death than white mothers.

Implementation of this plan is a primary focus of the Perinatal Action Collaborative (PAC). The PAC's members include leadership from the Shapiro Administration, stakeholders, maternal health care providers, community-based organizations focused on maternal and family supports, and people with lived experience. The collaborative is tasked with helping prioritize

recommendations outlined in the plan and improving the health of women in the Commonwealth.

Healthy Moms, Vibrant Futures also aligns with current DHS grant programs developed during the Shapiro Administration to support women's health. Created in 2024, the [Women's Health Services Program](#) funds providers statewide to administer prenatal care and postpartum supports, early detection and prevention of health conditions, parenting education programming, and referrals for assistance with other physical or behavioral health care needs.

"Improving maternal and infant health requires a statewide response implemented at the local level where care and support are provided," said **Department of Health Secretary Dr. Debra Bogen**. "The Healthy Moms, Vibrant Futures Action Plan was informed in part by the work of the Maternal Mortality Review Committee as well as diverse voices. The Action Plan is a blueprint to help ensure that pregnant women — especially disproportionately affected Black and rural women — their babies, and their families receive the care and support they need to thrive."

"The Shapiro Administration understands that substance use disorder is a family illness, including pregnant and postpartum women and their children," said **DDAP Secretary Dr. Latika Davis-Jones**. "This plan reflects a shared commitment to reducing maternal mortality, improving care for pregnant and postpartum women, and eliminating the stigma attached to reaching out for help."

"The Maternal Health Strategic Plan is a steppingstone toward better access to maternity care throughout the Commonwealth. PID looks forward to working with our sister agencies to get stuff done for pregnant Pennsylvanians and those planning a pregnancy or currently parenting a new family addition," said **Pennsylvania Insurance Commissioner Michael Humphreys**. "We want everyone to know that quality maternity care is available through their insurance, and that PID remains committed to addressing maternal health disparities here in the Commonwealth."

"This plan reflects the real experiences of women across Pennsylvania - those who have navigated long wait times, provider shortages, insurance barriers, and the often unseen weight of postpartum depression. We are proud to support this work and committed to turning it into action. Because every woman deserves to be believed, supported, and cared for - not only during pregnancy, but throughout postpartum recovery and beyond," said **Executive Director of the Governor's Advisory Commission on Women. Ashley N. Walkowiak**.

"Maternal health is not just a clinical issue; it is a community issue. At Hamilton Health Center, we are deeply committed to ensuring every mother, regardless of circumstance, has access to the care and support she needs to thrive," said **Hamilton Health, President & CEO Terese M. DeLaPlaine, JD**.

Read the [Maternal Health Strategic Action Plan: Healthy Moms, Vibrant Futures](#).

More information on maternal-child health programs available across Pennsylvania is available on [DHS' website](#).

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