



Department of Public Health and Human Services

Early Childhood and Family Support Division ♦ PO Box 4210 | 1625 11th Avenue | Helena MT 59620-4210
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Greg Gianforte, Governor

Charles Brereton, Director

The Montana Maternal Mortality Review Committee (MMRC) is a new structure and process for reviewing maternal deaths in Montana. The MMRC will work collaboratively with local Fetal, Infant, Child, and Maternal Mortality Review (FICMMR) teams in the counties where maternal deaths have occurred.

The Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) Nurse Abstractor will be a liaison between local FICMMR teams and the state MMRC. The Nurse Abstractor will serve as the DPHHS representative on the local review teams, pursuant to Montana Code Annotated § 50-19-403(2)(i), in counties that have experienced a maternal death. The Nurse Abstractor and the FICMMR designated lead will work together to obtain information related to the maternal death being reviewed; the Nurse Abstractor is authorized to request and receive information pursuant to Montana Code Annotated § 50-19-402 on behalf of the FICMMR.

Records are abstracted by the Nurse Abstractor. The abstracted information is stripped of all information that could identify a decedent, to include, but not limited to, former residence, hospital, health care provider, and place of death. Information is then synthesized into de-identified case summaries for review by the MMRC. All MMRC members are required to sign a confidentiality agreement to not discuss or disclose information gathered through review. Information that may relate to any specific individual, case, or health care provider will be strictly confidential and will not be included in reports.

Only aggregate data and recommendations compiled after review of all cases in a full calendar year will be provided in a biennial report. No information about individual case recommendations will be provided to either health care providers or facilities. All protocols comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule and state medical privacy statutes.

DPHHS is a covered entity and public health authority as delineated in HIPAA. Federal law allows a covered entity to disclose protected health information without individual authorization as required by law 1) to a public health authority for public health activities authorized by law and 2) to a health oversight agency for oversight activities authorized by law [45 CFR Section 164.512 (a), (b) and (d)].

FICMMR county leaders, in partnership with the State's Perinatal Quality Collaborative (PQC) and Maternal Health Leadership Council (MHLC), may work as an action arm of the MMRC to implement prevention recommendations developed during the MMRC and FICMMR review processes. The MMRC is not a policy-making body.

Approved: March 2022