

# URGENT MATTERS: MATERNITY CARE IN THE UNITED STATES



Improving the way maternity care is provided would have a widespread impact by nearly any measure. The need to do better and the opportunities for change make maternity care transformation a matter of urgency.

## IMPACT

### US ranks last among developed countries

Maternal deaths are a bellwether indicator of how well maternity care systems function overall. The US maternal mortality ratio – 26.4 deaths per 100,000 live births – is:

- nearly 3 times the rate in the United Kingdom (9.2)
- 3½ times that of Canada (7.3)
- 4½ times that of Spain (4.7)

### Complications and deaths are on the rise

- Since 1993, life, life-threatening complications of pregnancy and birth have continued to rise in the US.
- The US is the only developed country where the maternal mortality ratio **increased** between 1990 and 2015.

### Disparities persist

Black women are more likely to experience preterm birth and neonatal and maternal mortality.

- **Disparities affect women of color at all income levels.**
- From 2005 to 2014, the highest infant mortality rates were observed among non-Hispanic Black women.
- For over 60 years, **Black women in the US have been 3 to 4 times as likely to experience a maternal death** as white women.

### 100% of population affected

- 84% of women will give birth in their lifetime at least once.
- 100% of the population is affected by the quality of maternity care at birth.

## VALUE

### Poor value of care

Maternity care costs more in the US than in any other country; but the US fares worse than other high-income nations in terms of maternal mortality, infant mortality, and other basic health indicators.

### Dollars at stake

- US Medicaid and private insurance spend more on maternal and newborn hospital care than care for any other category hospitalization.
- Maternal and newborn care combined are the single largest cost for state Medicaid programs and commercial health plans.

### Public spending

Based on data between 2010 to 2016, 50% or more of births in 24 states in the US were covered by Medicaid.

### Skyrocketing costs

Between 1996 and 2013 in the US, hospital charges for childbirth care tripled.

### Largest percentage of hospital stays

- Childbirth is the most common type of hospital stay
- Nearly half of all hospital stays among 18-44 year olds (45%) and those covered by Medicaid (49%) were for maternal conditions.

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