

SOUTH DAKOTA STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
POLICY

Subject: Maternal Mortality
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POLICY STATEMENT

The SDSMA believes the maternal mortality rate for South Dakota is unacceptably high. Research indicates that the maternal mortality rate in South Dakota is 28 deaths per 100,000 live births compared to the national rate of 20.7

Research further indicates that maternal mortality is higher for women living in rural areas and among poorer communities. Adolescent women also face a higher risk of complications and death.

Women die because of complications during and following pregnancy and childbirth. Most of these complications develop during pregnancy and most are preventable and treatable. Other complications may exist before pregnancy but are worsened during pregnancy – especially if not managed as part of the woman’s care. The following major complications account for nearly 75 percent of all maternal deaths:

1. Severe bleeding – mostly bleeding after childbirth;
2. Infections – mostly after childbirth;
3. High blood pressure during pregnancy;
4. Complications from delivery; and
5. Unsafe abortion.

Based on published research, the SDSMA believes that a maternal mortality review committee (MMRC) is needed to evaluate all cases of maternal loss from the onset of pregnancy to 42 after pregnancy termination.

The SDSMA further believes data obtained through the MMRC will be beneficial in developing public health initiatives designed to lower the maternal mortality rate.

AUTHORITY

South Dakota State Medical Association Council of Physicians, 11/2/2018; Reaffirmed by South Dakota State Medical Association Board of Directors 6/1/2019.