



Delaware County Health Department Perinatal Periods of Risk Report

The Impact of Maternal Health on Fetal and Infant Mortality

What is the DELCO Perinatal Periods of Risk (PPOR) Report?

The DELCO PPOR Report is a review of Delaware County fetal and infant deaths over a 5-year period. PPOR provides data to support public policy to reduce disparities in fetal and infant mortality.

- Previous DELCO PPOR Reports were completed by the Foundation for Delaware County using data from 2008-2012 and 2012-2016. It is important to complete PPOR analyses in sequence to see the information over time. **The PPOR Report completed by the Delaware County Health Department includes data from 2016-2020.**

The DCHD PPOR found a large number of Black babies born at very low birth weight (VLBW < 3 lbs. 4 oz or 1,500 grams) as the main reason for infant mortality disparities in Delaware County during the 2016-2020 period. [*Normal birthweight: 5.5 - 8.75 lbs. or 2.5 - 4 kg, Low birthweight: 5 lbs. 8 oz or 2.5 kg*]

The **Maternal Health and Prematurity (MH/P)** period has the highest infant mortality rate

- Solutions to address MH/P risk period include pre-conceptional health, health behaviors, and perinatal care
- Risk factors for excess infant mortality due to very low birthweight include smoking, prenatal care, maternal age, parity (number of births), multiple pregnancies (twins, triplets), socioeconomic status and education, birth interval, maternal hypertension, and diabetes.

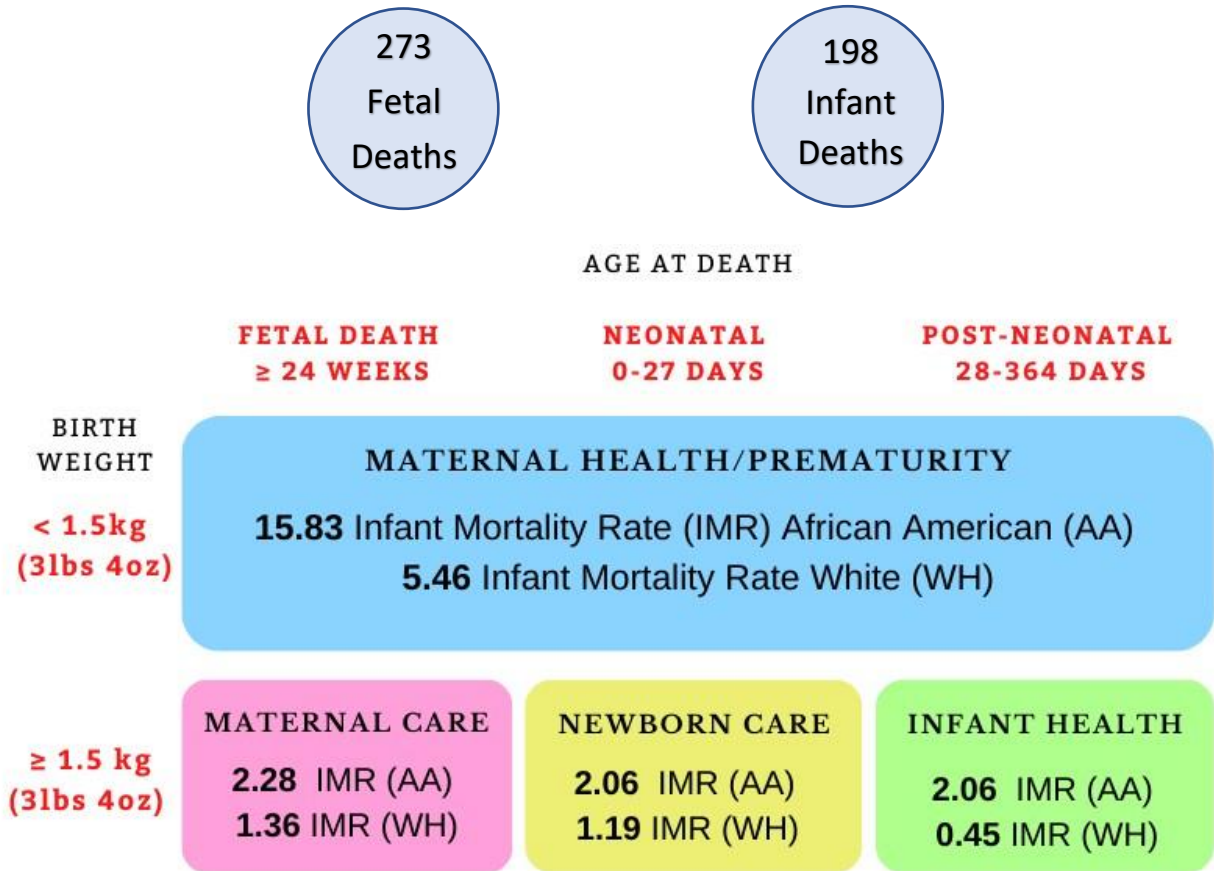
Although infant mortality rates have declined over time, significant disparities persist. We continue to research the main causes of these disparities and plan strategies to reduce excess premature deaths among Black infants. We encourage Delaware County policy interventions to take a comprehensive life course approach, rather than solely focusing on prenatal care and individual behavioral changes. This broader perspective, as detailed in Dr. Michael Lu's 12-point framework for addressing Black-White gap in birth outcomes, recognizes that interventions must span across a woman's entire life-span¹.

See the full DELCO PPOR Report here:

https://delcopa.gov/health/pages/pdf/DCHD_PPOR_2016-2020_Report.pdf

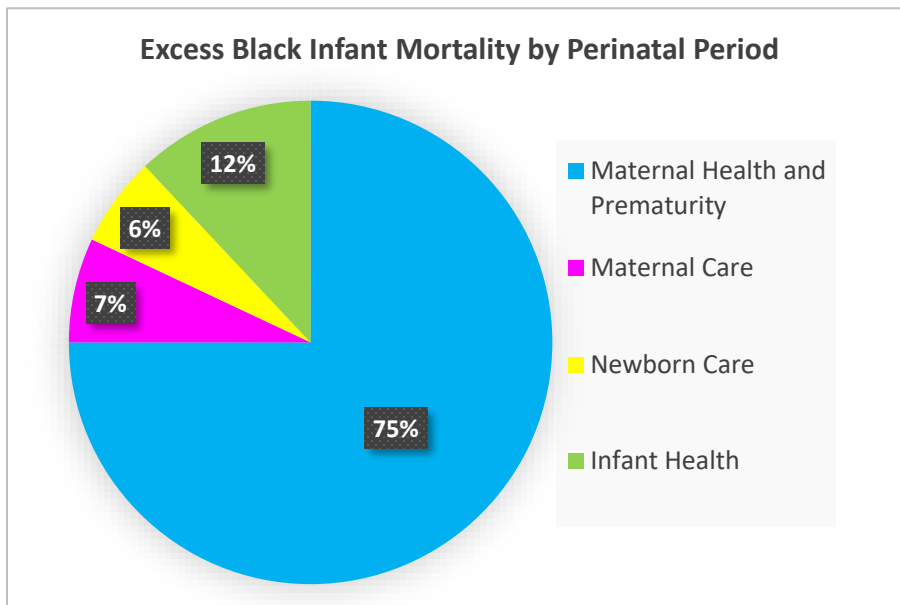
¹Lu, M. C., Kotelchuck, M., Hogan, V., Jones, L., Wright, K., & Halfon, N. (2010). Closing the Black-White gap in birth outcomes: a life-course approach. *Ethnicity & disease*, 20(1 Suppl 2), S2-76.

PPOR Analysis Phase I



The highest period of risk for infant mortality in Delaware County from 2016-2020 is the **Maternal Health and Prematurity** period. Infants in this period have a birthweight less than 1.5 kg (3lbs 4oz) and die anytime from 24 weeks gestation to 1 year of age.

PPOR Analysis Phase II



The percentages of excess Black infant mortality were found by subtracting Black infant mortality rates from White infant mortality rates in each perinatal period.

The largest amount of excess Black infant deaths occurs in the Maternal Health and Prematurity period of risk. We are seeing Black babies with increased rates of **very low birthweight** in comparison to White babies.