

Meeting Minutes of:
Illinois Department of Public Health
Maternal Mortality Review Committee (MMRC) subcommittee of Perinatal Advisory Committee
August 13, 2025, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
This meeting will be VIRTUAL ONLY

Members	Guests & IDPH
Robin L. Jones- Chair Amy Sloan-Gray Ashley Hunt Beth Plunkett Caroline Thomas Catherine Harth Charu Gupta Donald Reese Jennifer Banayan Jerry Loew Joan Briller Jose Ortiz Lori Folken Olga Lazala Patricia Lee King Pavitra Kotini-Shah Shirley Scott Stacie Geller Tayo Mbande Members NOT in Attendance Ramsey Unal -Excused Lee Smith-Excused Deborah Boyle-Excused Neha Bhardwaj-Excused Paula Melone-Excused Helen Cejtin- Excused Julieta Barroeta-Excused	Trishna Harris, IDPH Alexander Smith, IDPH Tonya Hedges, IDPH Joquine Nege, IDPH Nancy Martin, IDPH Hilary Kelly, IDPH Sierra Wilson, IDPH Leandra Diaz, IDPH Eugenia Olison, IDPH Cara Bergo, IDPH Julie Davis, IDPH Aliyah Love-Clark, UIC Abstractor Melissa Vargas, UIC Abstractor Trish Pitts, UIC Abstractor Woojung Lee, UIC Abstractor Stefani Caldwell, UIC April Caruso, APC Andrea Cross, APC Diedra Stewart, APC Jodi Hoskins, APC Susie Swain, APC Daniell Ashford, APC Andrea Cross, APC Joanne Sorce, APC Roma Allen, APC Connie Thompson, APC Maripat Zeschke, APC Abigail Holicky, UIC COM Taylor Breiter, UIC COM Lisa Mani, HFS Lori Orr, IL Dept of Human Services Lisa Cohen, IL Dept of Human Services, Substance Use Prevention and Recovery (SUPR)

Meeting Minutes of:
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
MATERNAL MORTALITY REVIEW COMMITTEE MMRC
August 13, 2025

Introductions

The meeting was called to order by the chair at 09:02 AM. The chair welcomed the members and guests.

Motions

- Motion to approve minutes from June 11, 2025
 - 1st: Stacie Geller, 2nd: Catherine Harth, Unanimous Approval
- Motion to close session to review the death/abstracts pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(15) (professional ethics and performance in death review) and 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(17) (matters protected under the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005, or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)).
 - 1st: Stacie Geller, 2nd: Shirley Scott, Unanimous Approval
- Motion to reopen the meeting.
 - 1st: Beth Plunkett, 2nd Stacie Geller Unanimous Approval
- Motion to adjourn the meeting
 - 1st: Stacie Geller, 2nd: Jerry Loew, Unanimous Approval

Agenda Items

- **Welcome & Introduction**
- Robin welcomed all the MMRC members and guests.
 - Joquine Nege took the roll call of the committee members.
- **Maternal Health Innovation Update**
 - *Developing Innovative MMRC Recommendations:* Illinois MHI Program in Partnership with IDPH by Cara Bergo, Abigail Holicky and Taylor Breiter.
 - Highlights of the context of the work they have been doing with respect to the activities of MMRC/V. Purpose is to reduce maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity by:
 - Establishing maternal health task forces in the state
 - Increase access to care that is comprehensive, high-quality, appropriate and ongoing before, during and after pregnancy
 - Improving the collection and use of the state- level data
 - Launching new interventions
 - Launching new innovative ways of committing MMRC data to action is most pertinent.
 - The updates included comparing the national catalog of recommendations vs Illinois, next steps and looking ahead, and the nest Illinois Maternal Mortality Report, and then concluded by listing some applications in MMRC meetings.
 - There were a lot of positive feedback from the members and some thought-provoking questions as well.
 - **Stacie Geller** commented that the update innovative ways of emphasizing on the factors rather than churning out recommendations during case review was freeing and allows members to think creatively

- **Eugenia Olson** was wondering if there are any highlights for homeless women. Taylor Breiter responded that there are few recommendations which could be shared with members
- **Beth Plunkett** asked how the other states are dealing with racism? No specific information to be shared in that regards now. Some states are more intentional while some are not
- **Robin L. Jones** wanted to know what CDC is doing with the recommendations they are collecting from all the states. Taylor responded that CDC has not got to that point yet. Cara added that there is no national catalog of recommendation as of now. Some states publish all their recommendations while some do not.
- **Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Updates**
 - Cara Bergo gave IDPH updates and informed members that the ongoing Blueprint project focused on Maternal Health and the state agency collaboration is in its final stage of approval in the governor's office, it's expected to be out in September 2025.
 - Title V application was submitted, and the review will be on September 4, 2025. This grant covers Maternal and Child Health program and MMRC is partially supported by the grant.
 - We received Notice of Award from the ERASE MM. MMRC program is currently funded from September of 2025 -September 2026. We are optimistic that the program will continue.
 - 640 (Maternal Levels of Care) code has been approved by legal and now with policy team for their review, and it will be going to the governor's office after the review.
 - The bi-annual Maternal Health Summit is scheduled to take place on November 18-19, 2025, in Bloomington Illinois. Members were advised to watch out for more information about registration.
 - Staffing update: Title V director's position has been posted, will be closing very soon. We are excited to be paired with a new fellow she will resume next week and will be with us at the next meeting.
 - Alex announced that MANDI-our new software replacing E-perinet is now up and running. Members were encouraged to check it out and give their feedback.
 - He also reminded all members that the previous link was faulty and a new link to the annual mandatory training is out and will be sent to everyone after the meeting, by Joquine.
- **Public Comment**
 - No public announcements/comments.
- **Brief Refresher on MMRC Mission & Process**
 - Cara gave a brief refresher on MMRC Mission and laid out the process of reviewing the cases. She stressed the need for all members to prereview the cases prior to the meeting day for ease of review.
 - Robin reminded every member that their voice is important. She encouraged members to express their view during the case review.
- **Moment of Silence and Closed Session for Death Review**
 - There was a moment of silence to reflect on these mothers and their families.
 - **The meeting closed with a motion from Stacie Geller, a second from Shirley Scott, and had unanimous approval.**
- *This committee closed pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(15) (professional ethics and performance in*

- *death review) and 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(17) (matters protected under the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005, or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)).*
- **The meeting was reopened, Beth Plunkett motioned, and Stacie Geller seconded.**
- **Debrief/Comments**
 - Robin appreciated those that have been volunteering as case leaders and encouraged members to volunteer.
 - The committee reviewed 5 (five) deaths abstracted for this meeting out of which 4(four) were pregnancy related.
 -

Next meeting is planned for October 15, 2025.

Adjournment

- Stacie Geller motioned to adjourn, Jerry Loew seconded, unanimous approval.