

MENTAL HEALTH PREGNANCY-ASSOCIATED DEATHS IN NEW YORK STATE, 2018-2021

FACTSHEET | DECEMBER 2025

Key Definitions

Pregnancy-Associated Death – A death during or within one year of pregnancy irrespective of cause.

Pregnancy-Related Death – A death while pregnant or within one year of the end of pregnancy from a pregnancy complication, a chain of events initiated by pregnancy, or the aggravation of an unrelated condition by the physiologic effects of pregnancy.

Pregnancy-Associated, But Not Related Death – A death during or within one year of the end of pregnancy from a cause that is not related to pregnancy.

Pregnancy-Associated, But Unable to Determine Relatedness Death – A death during pregnancy or within one year of the end of pregnancy where it cannot be determined from the available information whether the cause of death was related to pregnancy.

Mental Health Conditions – include substance use disorder, depressive disorder, anxiety disorder, bipolar disorder, psychotic disorder, and other mental health conditions.

Key Findings

Pregnancy-Associated Deaths due to Mental Health Conditions



1 out of 3 pregnancy-associated deaths in New York were due to mental health conditions, making it the leading cause.



2 out of 3 pregnancy-associated deaths occurred from **6 weeks to 1 year postpartum**.



Almost **2 out of 3** pregnancy-associated deaths were among **White, non-Hispanic** birthing people.



Almost **9 out of 10** pregnancy-associated deaths were from **substance use disorder**.

Pregnancy-Related Deaths due to Mental Health Conditions



1 out of 4 pregnancy-related deaths in New York were due to mental health conditions, making it the leading cause.



9 out of 10 pregnancy-related deaths occurred from **6 weeks to 1 year postpartum**.



Almost **1 out of 2** pregnancy-related deaths were among **Hispanic** birthing people.



More than **1 out of 2** pregnancy-related deaths were from **substance use disorder**.

9 out of **10** of pregnancy-related deaths were **potentially preventable**.

NEW YORK STATE RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS



2018-2020 Recommendations

- ❖ Engage community resources during prenatal and hospital discharge planning
- ❖ Guarantee safe, stable housing for pregnant and postpartum people experiencing homelessness
- ❖ Routinely screen for perinatal or postpartum mood and anxiety disorders throughout pregnancy and up to one year postpartum
- ❖ Develop an equitable system for pregnant and postpartum people who use substances that avoids family separation



New York State Actions

Mental Health Initiatives

- ❖ Released "Spotlight on Perinatal Mental Health" issue brief in 2022
- ❖ Expanded Project TEACH's Maternal Mental Health initiative in 2024
- ❖ Provided \$175,000 in 2023-2024 and \$100,000 in 2024-2025 to support Maternal Depression Peer Support program
- ❖ Created interdisciplinary Maternal Mental Health Workgroup to develop recommendations



Substance Use Disorder Program

- ❖ Implemented NYSPQC Opioid Use Disorder in Pregnancy & Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome Project (2018-2023)
- ❖ Increased universal screening tool implementation from 21% to 95.1% of participating facilities
- ❖ Increased referrals to OUD treatment by 18.8%
- ❖ Developed multilingual naloxone brochure for patients and families



For more information, visit www.health.ny.gov/MaternalHealthMatters or contact the New York State Maternal Mortality Review Initiative at mmr.bml@health.ny.gov