

# Investing in Maternal Health

## in the District of Columbia

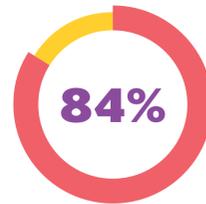
### WHAT IS MATERNAL HEALTH?

This refers to a woman's health during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postnatal period.<sup>1</sup> Maintaining maternal health is essential for ensuring the well-being of children and their mothers.

**A mother's survival depends on her access to quality maternal health care.**



In 2021, the maternal mortality rate in the United States was **32.9 deaths** per 100,000 live births, an **increase from 23.8** in 2020.<sup>2</sup>



of pregnancy-related deaths in 36 states between 2017 and 2019 were deemed preventable.<sup>3</sup>



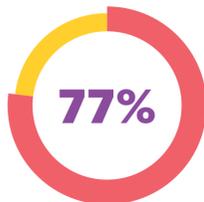
**Infant mortality rates can decline with improved maternal health care.**

Pregnancy complications were one of the leading causes of infant mortality in 2020.<sup>4</sup>

**Families and communities are stronger when mothers are healthy and thriving.**

Good maternal health can have long-term effects on the overall health, education, and socioeconomic status of a mother and her children, as well as the community as a whole.

**Black women and birthing people experience disproportionately higher rates of poor health outcomes due to pregnancy and childbirth.<sup>5</sup>**



In Washington, D.C., the preterm birth rate among Black women is **77% higher** than the rate among all other women.<sup>6</sup>



**70%** of pregnancy-associated deaths in the District between 2014 and 2018 occurred for people giving birth in Wards 7 and 8.<sup>7</sup>

Having access to health care and family planning services helps women make informed choices that can benefit their maternal health. AmeriHealth Caritas District of Columbia (DC) is answering the call to improve maternal health in the District:



#### BRIGHT START PROGRAM

Expecting enrollees have access to Bright Start®, a maternity care program that helps them make healthy choices for themselves and their babies. Bright Start can help enrollees find a prenatal provider and schedule their visits. To join Bright Start or to get more information, **call 1-877-759-6883**.



#### DOULA SERVICES

Research has shown that doula care improves health outcomes and leads to more satisfying birthing experiences.<sup>5</sup> AmeriHealth Caritas DC has expanded the doula benefits that are available to enrollees, including reimbursements for prenatal and postnatal visits.



#### NUTRITION

AmeriHealth Caritas DC delivers healthy meals at no cost to enrollees during their pregnancy and up to eight weeks after they give birth. Enrollees can contact Bright Start to sign up for this meal delivery program.

#### SOURCES:

- [https://www.who.int/health-topics/maternal-health#tab=tab\\_1](https://www.who.int/health-topics/maternal-health#tab=tab_1)
- [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/maternal-mortality/2021/maternal-mortality-rates-2021.htm#:~:text=The%20maternal%20mortality%20rate%20for,20.1%20in%202019%20\(Table\)](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/maternal-mortality/2021/maternal-mortality-rates-2021.htm#:~:text=The%20maternal%20mortality%20rate%20for,20.1%20in%202019%20(Table))
- <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/maternal-mortality/erase-mm/data-mmrc.html>
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- <https://healthlaw.org/doula-care-improves-health-outcomes-reduces-racial-disparities-and-cuts-cost/>
- <https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/reports/district-of-columbia/report-card>
- [https://ocme.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocme/agency\\_content/Maternal%20Mortality%20Review%20Committee%20Annual%20Report\\_Finalv2.pdf](https://ocme.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ocme/agency_content/Maternal%20Mortality%20Review%20Committee%20Annual%20Report_Finalv2.pdf)



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