

Maternal Mortality Review Committee (MMRC)

Friday, October 24, 2025 9:00 AM-4:00 PM

Oklahoma State Department of Health

123 Robert S. Kerr, 28th Floor, Room 1

Oklahoma City, OK 73102

Open Meeting Act: Announcement of the meeting was filed with the Office of the Secretary of State on Thursday, November 14, 2024 at 10:26 AM for the in-person meeting. The final agenda was shared via email October 23, 2025 at 10:02 AM, posted to the OSDH MMR web page on October 20, 2025 at 4:41 PM and posted at the OSDH Central Office at 8:02 AM on October 21, 2025.

Call to Order, Roll Call, and Determination of Quorum: Dr. Chad Smith, Chair, called the meeting of the Maternal Mortality Review Committee (MMRC) to order at 9:08 AM. A quorum was determined with the presence of:

Name	Entity Representation	Name	Entity Representation
Barbara O'Brien	Director, Office of Perinatal Quality Improvement	Kristy Wente, designee for Evelyn Radichel	Oklahoma Chapter, Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses
Dr. Angela Hawkins	Chair, Oklahoma Chapter of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists	Lori Essary	Director, Family Support and Prevention Services, Oklahoma State Department of Health
Dr. Chad Smith	Medical Director, Oklahoma Perinatal and Quality Improvement Collaborative	Jill Nobles-Botkin	Administrative Program Manager, Perinatal and Reproductive Health, Oklahoma State Department of Health
Dr. David Gahn	Southern Plains Tribal Health Board, Designee for Nicholas Barton	Regina Kizer	President, OK Chapter of the American College of Nurse Midwives

Committee Members/Designees Absent: Dr. John Stanley, Maternal Fetal Medicine, Dr. William Po, State Medical Association, Omare Jimmerson, Community Representative

Guests Present: None

OSDH Staff Present: Six case abstractors: Tony Fleshman, Nikki Garrod, Hilary Miller, Leah Eckman, Shelly Green; Jenna Bellantoni, Epidemiologist, Assessment, Family Support and Prevention Service; Alexis Lund, Epidemiology Intern, Assessment, Family Support and Prevention Service; and Dawn Butler, administrative support, Family Support and Prevention Service.

Public Comment: None

Vote to accept the July 25, 2025 meeting minutes as presented: Dr. Angela Hawkins made a motion to accept the July 25, 2025 meeting minutes as presented with Dr. David Gahn seconding the motion. Members voted accordingly.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Barbara O'Brien	✓			Dave Gahn	✓		
Lorri Essary	✓			Regina Kizer	✓		
Angela Hawkins	✓			Jill Nobles-Botkin	✓		
Kristy Wente	✓			Chad Smith	✓		

Motion Passed

Old Business:

Discussion and follow-up on previous recommendations- There was no follow-up on previous recommendations.

Legislative Updates- There were no legislative updates provided.

New Business:

MMRIA Training- Dr. Smith updated the committee, letting them know that a group of people attended the MMRIA User Training in Atlanta in August. There they met with MMRCs from across the United States. They were able to gain insight into how other committees collect and share data as well as strategies they are finding successful when making recommendations. One of the strategies that they found appealing was the practice of setting up separate committees that were responsible for taking the recommendations from the MMRC and putting them into action.

Dr. Hawkins also stated that they learned how other states were working with Tribal MMRCs to incorporate their data into the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Report for a more complete accounting of the deaths of these mothers.

Discussion was made on how to utilize the specialties of several types of providers to help bring recommendations and guidance to the public such as short-term committees and task forces.

Update on Interim studies- Dr. Hawkins provided some information regarding interim studies taking place. She stated none of the interim studies regarding maternal health have been given a date at this time but there was a presentation given by Metriarch regarding substance use disorders during pregnancy. She mentioned that there were several legislators present and others who needed to hear the information.

She also mentioned there was a study done on October 23rd regarding the Medical Right of Conscience. This was focused on abortion and contraception.

Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Report – Dr. Hawkins briefly updated the committee regarding the Annual Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Report. She stated that during the conference other MMRCs demonstrated how they presented their yearly reports. She stated that these were given as a presentation and not just a report that someone could access and read.

Midwifery Symposium- Barbara informed the committee that a Midwifery Symposium was held on October 3, 2025. She stated that they are trying to show how midwives can be an asset to providers by helping not only with a pregnant or birthing mother but can help provide service through the whole life of the patient. Barbara also shared that they hired a new staff member who will be working towards expanding access to midwifery care in the hospital/clinic setting, especially in rural areas.

Discuss and Vote on Meeting Dates and Times for 2026- Nikki proposed the following dates and times for the 2026 meetings: January 23, April 17, July 24, and October 30, 2026. The decision was made to schedule the October 30 meeting as an all-day meeting to maintain timeliness of case reviews with the possibility of adding additional hours to another meeting if needed. Regina Kizer made a motion to accept the proposed meeting dates and times with Barbara O'Brien seconding the motion. Members voted accordingly

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Barbara O'Brien	✓			Dave Gahn	✓		
Lorri Essary	✓			Regina Kizer	✓		
Angela Hawkins	✓			Jill Nobles-Botkin	✓		
Kristy Wente	✓			Chad Smith	✓		

Motion Passed

Moment of silence: Dr. Smith asked the members to observe a moment of silence in remembrance of the women who lost their lives, and the families left behind.

Enter into Executive Session: Dr. David Gahn made a motion to enter into Executive Session with Regina Kizer seconding. Executive Session to Review and Discuss Individual Cases of Pregnancy-Related and Pregnancy-Associated Maternal Death or Near Death, as Authorized by 63 O.S. § 1-242.2(C). Members voted accordingly.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Barbara O'Brien	✓			Dave Gahn	✓		
Lorri Essary	✓			Regina Kizer	✓		
Angela Hawkins	✓			Jill Nobles-Botkin	✓		
Kristy Wente	✓			Chad Smith	✓		

Motion Passed

Enter into Open Session: Barbara O'Brien made a motion to enter into open session with Kristy Wente seconding the motion. Members voted accordingly.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Barbara O'Brien	✓			Dave Gahn	✓		
Lorri Essary	✓			Regina Kizer	✓		
Angela Hawkins	✓			Jill Nobles-Botkin	✓		
Kristy Wente	✓			Chad Smith	✓		

Motion Passed

Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Matters Discussed in Executive Session: During the executive session the following recommendations were identified.

1. Federal and state legislators should increase funding for preconception and interconception healthcare, and OHCA should increase access to antenatal care and education for women of reproductive age.

2. Providers should screen every pregnant patient for mental health conditions and substance use disorders, document screenings, and refer to resources that serve pregnant patients accordingly in the perinatal period, in accordance with professional recommendations.
3. Providers should follow recommended practices in the AIM postpartum hemorrhage bundle and the ACOG practice guidelines in delivery and postpartum care.
4. Facilities should follow recommended practices in the AIM postpartum hemorrhage bundle and the ACOG practice guidelines for delivery and postpartum care and encourage interdepartmental communication regarding blood products in obstetric situations.
5. OPQIC should review the policies and procedures on interfacility and state blood bank collaboration on blood product availability for obstetric emergencies in rural settings.
6. Patients should obtain prenatal care to ensure medical conditions are identified and treated appropriately.
7. MMRC partners should launch a statewide campaign on safe use, overdose signs, naloxone availability, and reducing stigma toward perinatal substance use.

8. The MMRC will communicate with ME office emphasizing the importance of performing autopsies for pregnancy-associated cases.
9. Increase awareness of AOK guidelines and information from the AFE Foundation.
10. Increase access to mental health resources and treatment in healthcare facilities, the court system, and in the community. Increase public awareness by providing education on signs of suicidal ideation and how to respond (e.g., QPR, Mental Health First Aid).
11. Implement the AIM SUD and PMHC bundle.

Adjourn: Dr. David Gahn made a motion to adjourn the meeting with Barbara O'Brien seconding.

Meeting adjourned at 3:11 PM.

Next Meeting:
January 23, 2026
123 Robert S. Kerr
Oklahoma City, OK 73102