

Program Description

The overall goal of the Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Project (FIMR) is to enhance the health and well being of women, infants and families by improving the community resources and service delivery systems available to these families. FIMR brings together key members of the community to examine various factors contributing to fetal and infant mortality and works to implement change. Traditionally, the County has conducted FIMR reviews on specially selected cases by having Public Health Nurses (PHNs) interview mothers and complete a case review of the medical and autopsy records. Following the review, a Technical Review Panel composed of doctors, coroners, and public health professionals made recommendations for changes to prevent more fetal and infant deaths. Currently, MCAH is developing a population-based approach to replace case reviews. This new methodology will use written and telephone surveys of mothers and will allow more cases to be analyzed each year. Based on the Perinatal Periods of Risk framework, a tool to prioritize and mobilize prevention efforts in the community, the revised FIMR project involves analyzing fetal and infant death cases Countywide and recommending appropriate policies and interventions for reducing the mortality rate.

Important Things to Know

- An infant death is a death occurring before a baby reaches his or her first birthday. A fetal death is a death of a fetus before delivery.
- Low birth weight (baby born too small) and prematurity (baby born too soon) are the leading causes of infant deaths.
- Factors related to infant deaths include, but are not limited to, race/ethnicity, pre-maturity, low birth weight, maternal substance use or abuse (e.g. alcohol, tobacco and illicit drug), inadequate prenatal care, maternal medical complications during pregnancy, short time periods between pregnancies, injury and infection.
- African American fetal-infant mortality rate is more than 2 times higher than other ethnic/racial groups. Therefore, FIMR focuses particularly on African American cases.
- FIMR uses the findings to direct grief support and interventions for families who have lost an infant.

For more information, please call call (213) 639-6457
or visit <http://lapublichealth.org/mch>
and click on Fetal Infant Mortality Review Program.



