



NEWS RELEASE

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The Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs and *Merck for Mothers* Team Up to Help Reduce the Number of Women Who Die in Pregnancy and Childbirth

Washington, DC, November 19, 2013 – The Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP) today announced their program focused on improving maternal health outcomes for women in collaboration with *Merck for Mothers*, the Merck initiative to create a world where no woman dies giving life.

In the United States, pregnancy-associated mortality is a relatively rare but troubling event. However, since 1990 the U.S. maternal mortality rate has nearly doubled despite improvements in maternal mortality rates globally. Further, significant disparities in maternal deaths persist here in the U.S., with black women dying from pregnancy related causes at three times the rate of white women. In addition to the tragic increase in deaths and significant disparities, the CDC estimates that roughly 50,000 women nearly die from complications of pregnancy or childbirth.

Currently, the United States lacks a complete understanding of its maternal mortality rate, the drivers of increase and disparities because of limitations in the data systems used to track and analyze maternal death.

"Since its inception, the Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services Block Grant has been the foundation and locus of accountability for ensuring the health of our nation's mothers and children. Merck for Mothers new partnership with AMCHP strengthens state maternal mortality reviews so we better understand the root causes of maternal death and illness and helps Title V MCH programs translate information from reviews into actions – programs and policies – that will prevent future maternal deaths and improve women's health," said Millie Jones, MPH, president of AMCHP.

AMCHP is currently working with health leaders who support Maternal Mortality Reviews in **Colorado, Delaware, Georgia, New York, North Carolina, and Ohio to prevent maternal death and improve maternal health outcomes.**

"We are proud to work with AMCHP to address critical gaps in maternal health care to help ensure women have safe and healthy pregnancies and childbirths," said Naveen Rao, MD, lead, *Merck for Mothers*. "In the rest of the world, rates of maternal mortality are decreasing, but unfortunately, here in the United States rates are on the rise."

To learn more visit www.amchp.org or merckformothers.com.

About AMCHP

AMCHP is the national membership association of state maternal and child health leaders. As an advocate, resource and partner, AMCHP supports state MCH programs and provides national leadership on issues affecting women, children and families and envisions a society where healthy children and health families live in healthy communities. *Every Mother* is consistent with our strategic goals to share best practices, communicate the importance of state MCH, and build the capacities of our members to improve health outcomes. For more information, visit amchp.org or connect with AMCHP on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

About Merck for Mothers

Merck for Mothers is a 10-year, \$500 million initiative focused on creating a world where no woman dies giving life. Drawing on the company's history of discovering innovative, life-saving medicines and vaccines, *Merck for Mothers* is applying Merck's scientific and business expertise – as well as its financial resources and experience in taking on tough global healthcare challenges – to reduce maternal mortality around the world. *Merck for Mothers* is focused on access to quality care, product innovation, and awareness and advocacy. For more information, visit www.merckformothers.com and connect with us on [Facebook](#).

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