

# FACT SHEET



## Maternal Health in the 2023 General Assembly

**Problem: Black women in Virginia are dying in preventable pregnancy-related deaths at alarmingly higher rates than any other group, higher than national average.**

According to Virginia's Maternal Mortality Review Team, the majority (51%) of pregnancy-related deaths in Virginia result from provider-related factors—and not underlying health conditions. An alarming correlation is the recent CDC estimation that 90 percent of maternal deaths are preventable. We need to support and sustain innovative, proven strategies and new paradigms of maternal care delivery to mitigate preventable deaths and eliminate racial disparities in maternal care.

### **ACCESS: HB 1567 Rasoul**

**Creating Workgroup to Develop Plan to Expand Perinatal Health Hub Model:** This bill would direct the Virginia Neonatal Perinatal Collaborative (which is funded by the General Assembly), in collaboration with the Virginia Maternal Quality Care Alliance and Urban Baby Beginnings, to form a workgroup to develop a five-year plan to expand the perinatal health hub model to address the growing span of maternal health care deserts resulting from the closure of labor and delivery wards of major health systems. UBB currently runs hubs in Central Virginia and Hampton Roads, which reported better birth and health outcomes for children despite barriers to care during the COVID pandemic. The hub is a community-based model of connecting health care and other resource providers to support the maternal health needs as well as wraparound family

services to address the unique social determinants of health of the community it serves.

### **BIAS: HB 1734 Head & Maldonado/SB**

#### **1440 Locke & Hashmi Establishing**

#### **Implicit Bias Training Licensing Criterion for Perinatal Health Care Professionals:**

Continued from the 2022 Regular Session, this bill establishes two hours of continuing education in implicit bias or cultural competency every other biennium licensing renewal cycle for all practitioners who have direct contact with birthing people who are expecting or of childbearing age. Several states report significant, and even historic, reduction in the racial disparities of maternal and infant mortality and overall improvement of birth outcomes as a result of implementing this policy change.

### **COVERAGE: HB 1511 Adams, D./SB 1275**

#### **Dunnivant Authorizing Licensed**

#### **Midwives to Carry and Administer**

**Medications:** The Virginia Midwife Alliance is seeking authorization for licensed midwives to carry and administer medications. Certified Professional Midwives, who work in freestanding birthing centers, are not permitted to give maternity patients typical drugs administered during labor to ensure safe deliveries. According to the CDC, the top two causes of preventable pregnancy-related deaths are hemorrhaging and preeclampsia, which can be mitigated respectively by the administration of Pitocin and oxygen.