

RESOLUTION

Subject: Improving Mental Health Care Services for Post-Partum Mothers  
Submitted by: Margo Nelis, Morgan Sydnor, Maggie Stull (Medical Student Section)  
Referred to: Reference Committee

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WHEREAS, depression, the most common mood disorder in the general population, is approximately twice as common in women as in men, with its initial onset peaking during the reproductive-age years<sup>4</sup>; and

WHEREAS, 10% to 20% of mothers are believed to experience depressive symptoms during their postpartum course, making postpartum depression (PPD) the most common serious postpartum complication<sup>3</sup>; and

WHEREAS, postpartum depression is defined as a specific type of depressive mood disorder that follows pregnancy and affects the ability to care for the child<sup>2</sup>; and

WHEREAS, postpartum depression can be seen in all persons capable of bearing children, including non-binary and transgender men<sup>7</sup>; and

WHEREAS, the national average of postpartum depression is 13.4%, whereas Kentucky has an average of 13.9% of women who suffer from the disorder<sup>2</sup>; and

WHEREAS, the maternal risks of untreated postpartum depression include weight concerns, substance use disorders, social relationship complications, breastfeeding difficulty, or persistent depression compared to the women who seek treatment<sup>1</sup>; and

WHEREAS, the negative consequences of postpartum depression on infant health include poor cognitive function, behavioral inhibition, emotional maladjustment, violent behavior, and psychiatric and medical disorders in adolescence<sup>1</sup>; and

WHEREAS, research shows that improving screening for PPD increases diagnosis rates but, improvements in treatment and follow-up are needed to improve clinical outcomes<sup>3</sup>; and

WHEREAS, recommendations to promote postpartum health care include support groups and designing long-term educational programs for mothers, and conducting research focused on postpartum maternal health outcomes<sup>5</sup>; and

WHEREAS, The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologist recommends that providers screen each patient for postpartum depression and anxiety during a postpartum care visit following delivery and provide treatment options for women diagnosed with PPD<sup>2</sup>; and

WHEREAS, the AMA supports advocating for enhanced mental health services for women during the postpartum period (H-420.953), now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that KMA supports improvements in mental health care services for the postpartum period to improve maternal and infant health outcomes; and be it further

RESOLVED, that KMA supports advocating for funding of programs that aid postpartum depression research.

## References:

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- 1 Slomian J, Honvo G, Emonts P, Reginster J-Y, Bruyère O. Consequences of maternal postpartum depression: A systematic review of maternal and infant outcomes. *Womens Health (Lond Engl)*. 2019;15:1745506519844044. doi:[10.1177/1745506519844044](https://doi.org/10.1177/1745506519844044).
- 2 Explore Postpartum Depression in Kentucky | 2021 Health of Women And Children Report. America's Health Rankings. Accessed July 24, 2022. [https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/health-of-women-and-children/measure/postpartum\\_depression/state/KY](https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/health-of-women-and-children/measure/postpartum_depression/state/KY)
- 3 Gjerdingen D, Yawn B. Postpartum Depression Screening: Importance, Methods, Barriers, and Recommendations for Practice. *The Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine*. Published online May 2007. doi:[10.3122](https://doi.org/10.3122)
- 4 Cheng C-Y, Fowles ER, Walker LO. Postpartum Maternal Health Care in the United States: A Critical Review. *J Perinat Educ*. 2006;15(3):34-42. doi:[10.1624/105812406X119002](https://doi.org/10.1624/105812406X119002)
- 5 Screening for Perinatal Depression. Accessed July 24, 2022. <https://www.acog.org/en/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2018/11/screening-for-perinatal-depression>
- 6 Pregnant Transgender Men at Risk for Depression and Lack of Care, Rutgers Study Finds. Accessed July 27, 2022. <https://www.rutgers.edu/news/pregnant-transgender-men-risk-depression-and-lack-care-rutgers-study-finds>