

RESOLUTION

Subject: Increasing Medicaid Reimbursement for Obstetric Care in Rural Communities

Submitted by: Northern Kentucky Medical Society

Referred to: Reference Committee

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Kentucky has a maternal mortality rate of 34.6 per 100,000 births<sup>1</sup>, while the national average is 23.2 per 100,000 births<sup>1</sup>; and

WHEREAS, over 70 of the 120 counties in Kentucky do not have a practicing obstetrician<sup>2</sup>, rural counties are specifically, facing substantial barriers in accessing obstetric care due to provider shortage and hospital closures<sup>3</sup>; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid covers nearly half of births in rural communities in Kentucky<sup>3</sup>, yet, low Medicaid reimbursements are a key driving force in nearly 20% of Kentucky's rural inpatient hospitals that are at risk for closure<sup>4</sup>; and

WHEREAS, increases in Medicaid reimbursement rates for obstetricians have increased providers' willingness to accept pregnant women with Medicaid in other states such as California<sup>5</sup>; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that KMA advocate to the General Assembly for increased Medicaid reimbursement for obstetric care in rural communities in order to strengthen the obstetric workforce and support improved maternal health outcomes in rural areas of the state.

**References:**

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2. Jett, Molly. "Research Shows 72 of Kentucky's 120 Counties Are without an OB-Gyn." *WDRB*, 4 Mar. 2023, [www.wdrb.com/news/research-shows-72-of-kentuckys-120-counties-are-without-an-ob-gyn/article\\_ba838c2c-ba2d-11ed-83c1-5b37fd5e39e2.html](http://www.wdrb.com/news/research-shows-72-of-kentuckys-120-counties-are-without-an-ob-gyn/article_ba838c2c-ba2d-11ed-83c1-5b37fd5e39e2.html).
3. Osorio, Joan Alker and Aubrianna, et al. "Medicaid Plays a Key Role for Maternal and Infant Health in Rural Communities." *Center For Children and Families*, 13 June 2025, [ccf.georgetown.edu/2025/05/15/medicaid-plays-a-key-role-for-maternal-and-infant-health-in-rural-communities/](http://ccf.georgetown.edu/2025/05/15/medicaid-plays-a-key-role-for-maternal-and-infant-health-in-rural-communities/).
4. Bluegrass live. "13 of Kentucky's 71 Rural Inpatient Hospitals at Risk of Closing." *Bluegrass Live*, 13 Aug. 2024, [bluegrasslive.com/2024/08/13/13-of-kentuckys-71-rural-inpatient-hospitals-at-risk-of-closing/?utm](http://bluegrasslive.com/2024/08/13/13-of-kentuckys-71-rural-inpatient-hospitals-at-risk-of-closing/?utm).
5. Nesbitt, T S et al. "Obstetric care, Medicaid, and family physicians. How policy changes affect physicians' attitudes." *The Western journal of medicine* vol. 155,6 (1991): 653-7.