The pregnancy-related mortality rate (PRMR) is the number of pregnancy-related deaths per 100,000 live births. A pregnancy-related maternal death is defined as the death of a woman while pregnant or within one year of pregnancy due to any cause related to or aggravated by her pregnancy or its management. This does not include deaths from accidental or incidental causes like homicide. A pregnancy-associated maternal death includes all causes. Mississippi (MS) has one of the highest PRMR in the US and that rate has been climbing for more than a decade. The total 3-year (2010-2012) average PRMR for MS was 39.7 deaths per 100,000 live births. The white PRMR was 29.3 and the black PRMR was 54.7. The most recent U.S. PRMR was 17.8 (2009) and the Healthy People 2020 PRMR goal is 11.4. To reach the Healthy People 2020 goal, MS will need to decrease the total PRMR by 71%, including a 60% decline for the white rate and a nearly 80% decline for the black rate.

Among Mississippi women who died during or within one year of pregnancy between January 1, 2011 and December 31, 2012, the most common demographic was a nonwhite female between 20 and 29 years of age. She held a high school diploma or equivalent, and was actively employed.
Pregnancy-Related Deaths by Public Health District, MS, 2011-2012

During 2011 and 2012, all MS Public Health Districts recorded at least one pregnancy-associated mortality case. The greatest number of cases occurred in District V, which is the state’s most populous district.

Pregnancy-Related Deaths by Payer Source, MS, 2011-2012

All but one woman had a source of healthcare coverage at the time of death. It is important to note that the woman without insurance did have Medicaid coverage at the time of delivery, but died after her post-partum Medicaid eligibility ended.

Pregnancy-Related Causes of Death (Pooled), MS, 2011-2012

All pregnancy-related causes of death from all cases were pooled together to illustrate the frequency of certain diagnostic groups. These numbers do not reflect the actual number of cases, but rather the frequency each cause of death appears on the death certificate.

Pregnancy-Related Deaths by WHO BMI Class, MS, 2011-2012

Maternal weights and heights were used to calculate body mass index (BMI) which were grouped by World Health Organization (WHO) BMI class. Less than 20% of cases were Underweight (BMI < 18.5) or Normal weight (BMI 18.5-24.9). About 11% were Overweight (BMI 25.0-29.9). More than 70% were classified at varying classes of obesity (I = BMI 30.0-34.9, II = BMI 35.0-39.9, & III = BMI ≥ 40.0) including one case with BMI > 100.

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This document was created by Juanita Graham, DNP, RN, FRSPH (Juanita.Graham@msdh.ms.gov) of the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH), Office of Health Data and Research with contributions from Charlene Collier, MD, MPH.