

ANALYSIS

Item 15: Oregon Health Authority Preventing Maternal Mortality

Analyst: Matt Stayner

Request: Approve, retroactively, the submission of a federal grant application to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the amount of \$2,500,000 over five years for actions to reduce the risk for pregnancy-related deaths in Oregon.

Analysis: The funding is to be used to support the Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee (ORS 432.600) to increase prevention by improving data availability and data quality to better identify and characterize pregnancy-related deaths and related health inequities.

The Oregon Health Authority grant request of \$2.5 million represents requested funding of \$500,000 per-year over a five-year period. The grant application deadline is May 23, 2024. OHA submitted a letter indicating its intention to apply for the grant funding on April 29, 2024. No state matching funds are required. The agency indicates that it would request a full-time program analyst position and associated Federal Funds expenditure limitation to support the program if awarded funding as requested.

Recommendation: The Legislative Fiscal Office recommends that the Emergency Board approve the request.

Request: Retroactive authorization to apply for federal grant totaling \$2,500,000 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Enhancing Reviews and Surveillance, to Eliminate Maternal Mortality to support Oregon's Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee (MMRC).

Recommendation: Approve the request.

Discussion: OHA requests retroactive authorization to apply for a \$2,500,000 grant offered through CDC. This grant will support MMRC to better identify the leading causes of maternal deaths in Oregon. MMRC data assists with identifying and prioritizing interventions that can be used to reduce health inequities and preventable pregnancy-related deaths. The grant will support the development and implementation of data-informed strategies that focus on reducing inequities among disproportionately impacted populations by improving data availability and quality to understand pregnancy-related deaths and related health inequities in Oregon.

If funded, OHA plans to return to the Legislature with a request for federal funds expenditure limitation and position authority for one full-time Program Analyst 3 position to serve as the Outreach Coordinator to prioritize MMRC community engagement. The grant was announced on March 18, 2024, the agency provided a 10-day notice on April 29, 2024, and applications were due on May 20, 2024. There is no match or maintenance of effort required for the grant.



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

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April 29, 2024

Senator Rob Wagner, Co-Chair
Representative Julie Fahey, Co-Chair
State Emergency Board
900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs:

Nature of Request

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Public Health Division is requesting retroactive approval to apply for a competitive federal funding opportunity from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), *Enhancing Reviews and Surveillance to Eliminate Maternal Mortality*. OHA learned of the funding opportunity on March 18, 2024 and the application is due May 20, 2024. OHA is also putting forward a 10-day notification letter to the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House today, April 29, 2024.

This new competitive grant will support Oregon's Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Review Committee (MMRC) and enable the Oregon MMRC to better identify the leading causes of maternal deaths in Oregon, understand the impact of social determinants as contributing factors, and enhance capacity to make recommendations to address preventable pregnancy-related deaths, particularly for communities disproportionately impacted.

If approved, OHA anticipates receiving \$0.5 million annually, for a total of \$2.5 million, which will be available from Sept. 30, 2024 to Sept. 29, 2029. This grant requires no matching funds nor are there requirements for maintenance of effort.

Agency Action

To enhance OHA's ability to implement ORS 432.600 and ultimately reduce the risk for pregnancy-related deaths in Oregon, this new federal funding opportunity will strengthen Oregon's ability to investigate cases and develop transformative recommendations for preventing future deaths. It will accomplish this by enhancing the overall quality of MMRC data for identifying the drivers of maternal mortality and associated contributing disparities and by

also supporting MMRC information dissemination about pregnancy-related deaths in Oregon and opportunities for prevention.

Oregon's MMRC (ORS 432.600) was established in 2018 within the OHA Public Health Division (PHD) and is staffed by the OHA Maternal and Child Health Section (MCH). This Governor-appointed committee reviews deaths that occurred during or within one year following the end of pregnancy, including clinical factors and social determinants surrounding each case. Based on these reviews, the committee develops recommendations to prevent similar deaths in the future.

Specifically, this funding opportunity will support the development and implementation of data-informed strategies to prevent pregnancy-related deaths that focus on reducing inequities among disproportionately impacted populations by improving data availability and quality to better understand pregnancy-related deaths and related health inequities in Oregon. It will add capacity to conduct key informant interviews to inform individual case review and outreach to communities to better collaborate and focus on reducing inequities.

This grant supports OHA's strategic goal of eliminating inequities by 2030 and promotes the mission for communities to achieve optimum physical, mental, and social well-being. MMRC data assists with identifying and prioritizing interventions that can be used to reduce health inequities and preventable pregnancy-related deaths. The committee reviews the social components of each case which often overlap with the Five Priorities identified by the 2020-24 State Health Improvement Plan that affect health outcomes: 1) institutional bias, 2) adversity, trauma and toxic stress, 3) behavioral health, 4) economic drivers of health, and 5) access to equitable health care.

If funded, OHA will request expenditure limitation and position authority for one full-time Program Analyst 3 position to serve as the Outreach Coordinator to prioritize MMRC community engagement and provide additional program capacity.

Action Requested

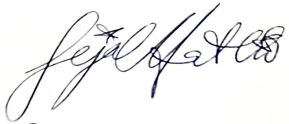
OHA requests retroactive approval to apply for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), *Enhancing Reviews and Surveillance to Eliminate Maternal Mortality* grant.

Senator Rob Wagner
Representative Julie Fahey
April 22, 2024
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Legislation Affected

None.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sejal Hathi', is written over a light yellow rectangular background.

Sejal Hathi, MD MBA
Director

EC: Matt Stayner, Legislative Fiscal Office
Patrick Heath, Department of Administrative Services
Kate Nass, Department of Administrative Services
Amanda Beitel, Legislative Fiscal Office