



Making Strides but We're Not There Yet

Infant and maternal mortality rates are two of the biggest indicators of public health. Indiana's maternal mortality rate is the third-highest in the nation and its infant mortality rate is also high.

In 2021, the Indiana Department of Health's Maternal Mortality Review Board identified 60 deaths in the state related to pregnancy. Of those deaths, 48 were preventable. That means 48 families suffered the loss of a loved one in a manner that could have been avoided. Indiana can and must do better to protect the health of its moms and babies.

So What Can You Do?

Provide support for doulas.

What is a doula?

A doula is defined as “as a professional labor assistant who provides physical and emotional support to you and your partner during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period.”

Today, doulas are support persons for the entire birth spectrum, including pregnancy, labor/delivery, and postpartum. They are advocates for women, children, and families. Doulas complement a medical team, but they do not provide clinical diagnosis to their clients.

Why doulas?

Doulas have been proven to improve the pregnancy, labor, and delivery outcomes of their clients. Having a doula in the birth room provides these benefits:

- Decreases rate of C-Section by 50%
- Decreases length of labor by 25%
- Decreases use of oxytocin by 40%
- Decreases requests of epidural by 60%

For More Information Regarding the Benefits of Doulas to Women:



Do You Need a Doula?

Learn more about the medical benefits that having a doula in the birthing room can provide

Having a Doula

Learn more about the role that doulas play in their clients' journey from pregnancy through postpartum and how it

Doula Care Saves Lives, Improves Equity, and Empowers Mothers. State Medicaid Programs Should Pay For It.

to mothers in this article from the Mayo Clinic.

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can benefit their families in this article from the American Pregnancy Association.

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This article from Health Affairs highlights the systemic benefits of doulas in the healthcare system and what programs currently exist to support state funding of doulas.

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IN4Doulas a movement that intends to educate and advocate for the expansion of access to doula services for Hoosier families, building upon the work that the Indiana General Assembly has begun. In 2019, the General Assembly passed [SB 416](#), which provided for reimbursement for doulas through Medicaid.

[SB 416](#) was innovative and ahead of most other states. However, funds for doula reimbursement are not currently in the State budget. Because the current cost of using doulas can range from \$600 to \$1,500 per birth, the women who are in the most need of their services cannot access them. Expanding access by funding these necessary services can only improve health outcomes for Hoosier moms and babies.

Through our work, we hope to accomplish two primary goals:

- Creating a doula workforce committee
- Create and identify a livable reimbursement rate for doulas.