



## A Comprehensive Care Model for Moms and Babies

**Who:** Ohio Department of Medicaid

**Where:** Ohio (statewide)

**What:** A comprehensive maternal care perinatal care program that introduces care delivery and payment reforms for obstetrical practices that build connection and support women with Medicaid.

**WHY:** In December 2020, Governor Mike DeWine established the Eliminating Racial Disparities in Infant Mortality Task Force, made up of local, state, and national leaders to identify needed changes to address Ohio's racial disparities in infant mortality. Given their role in covering a majority of Ohio births in recent years, the Ohio Department of Medicaid looked to improve infant outcomes by investing in the health of pregnant and postpartum women.

**GOAL:** Ohio Medicaid aims to improve maternal health outcomes by creating a new care model that deploys evidence-based services, including enhanced care coordination and home visiting, through partnerships between maternal healthcare providers and community-based organizations. The agency aims to support 35,000 childbearing moms and families in the first years of the program.

**HOW:** Ohio Medicaid developed a model that incentivizes the person-centered care, community engagement, and trust required for raising the bar for maternal health. As a starting point, they gathered input from multiple fields and community organizations. The resulting Comprehensive Maternal Care (CMC) model enables the state to work with healthcare providers and systems to narrow health disparities and reduce the infant mortality rate. The program introduces care delivery and payment reforms for obstetrical practices that build connection and support women as they and their families navigate pre- and postnatal care. The program emphasizes supporting women with higher-risk pregnancies.

The CMC model will reward providers who proactively address patient and family needs across the entire cycle of childbearing. Prospective per-member-per-month value-based payments align with the risk level of enrolled Medicaid members.

Providers who opt in to the program can earn financial incentives for developing and implementing a care model that demonstrates a commitment to personally engaging the patient, their family, and their community. Providers will be expected to collaborate with community partners to gain a better understanding of the cultural and social drivers affecting health.

To participate in the CMC, obstetrical practices will be required to establish a patient and family advisory council to hear first-hand accounts of how access to care, cultural competence, and effective communication affect patient outcomes. Practices must use information from these councils to improve patient experience and reduce disparities. Additional criteria for participation include:

- Conducting a mandatory pregnancy risk assessment for each patient.
- Engaging the community in developing a patient-centered approach that builds trust. Providing appropriate supports and fostering positive patient experiences throughout care.
- Monitoring progress and patient engagement.
- Formally assessing areas of strength and needs annually.

Ohio Medicaid expects that beyond the benefit of providing women and families clinical and community supports, the CMC initiative will use patient and community data to identify best practices, inform public policy, advance health outcomes, and strengthen healthcare—community relationships.

**RESULTS:** The CMC model was just deployed at the beginning of 2023. While it is too early to identify results, it highlights the importance of collaborating with community advocates, organizations, and members to develop new strategies for addressing seemingly intractable health challenges, and setting up payment structures that build on community assets.

### The Takeaway

With compassion, conviction, and community collaboration, Medicaid agencies can turn the tide in maternal health equity by properly linking payment incentives to care and outcomes, supporting providers, and building genuine relationships with community groups. If successful, Ohio's CMC can serve as a model for other state Medicaid programs to advance maternal health equity.