

STATE OF DELAWARE



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT DOVER

EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER THIRTY-SEVEN

TO: HEADS OF ALL STATE DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES AND AUTHORITIES
RE: CREATING THE DELAWARE PERINATAL BOARD

WHEREAS, the State of Delaware has undertaken a number of important and substantial initiatives to improve the health of pregnant women and their babies, including, but not limited to: substantially increasing Medicaid coverage for pregnant women and infants; initiating the Home Visiting program for first-time mothers and other programs such as Smart Start, Genetic Services, the Child Development WATCH program, and Prenatal WATCH/Early Pregnancy Screening; expanding the Women, Infants and Children ("WIC") program; establishing the Ecumenical Council on Maternal and Infant Health; and forming the Child Death Review Committee; and

WHEREAS, despite these aggressive efforts, Delaware's infant mortality rate has been persistently among the worst in the nation; and

WHEREAS, infant mortality is a multi-faceted public health problem to which there are no "quick fixes" or simple answers; and

WHEREAS, state government alone cannot solve the infant mortality problem in Delaware, since the rate of infant mortality is powerfully influenced by the individual circumstances, health, and behavior of prospective and new parents; and

WHEREAS, state government can provide leadership to coordinate governmental, private sector, and community efforts to address the many causes of infant mortality and to ensure that the considerable resources invested in helping to alleviate this problem are used efficiently; and

WHEREAS, many Delawareans and Delaware organizations interested in lowering our rate of infant mortality believe that it is desirable to create a broad-based Delaware Perinatal Board comprised of concerned Delawareans to provide such leadership.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, THOMAS R. CARPER, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Delaware, do hereby declare and order the following:

1. The Delaware Perinatal Board is hereby established. It shall consist of members appointed by the Governor who shall be broadly representative of the population of the State.
2. The Chairperson shall be appointed by the Governor from among the members of the Council and shall serve as such at the pleasure of the Governor.
3. The terms of the members of the Board shall be at the pleasure of the Governor.
4. The duties and functions of the Board shall be to advise the Governor, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Services (the "Secretary") and the Director of the Division of Public Health (the "Director") regarding strategies to reduce infant mortality in Delaware.
5. The Delaware Perinatal Board will be action-oriented and will set specific goals to address comprehensively the myriad of issues influencing infant mortality and, to that end, its duties shall include:
 - a) providing oversight for the State's infant mortality problem;
 - b) assessing, defining, and prioritizing the problems contributing to infant mortality by utilizing information from the Child Death Review Committee and other sources;
 - c) assisting in the development of a comprehensive, coherent approach to the problem of infant mortality, including the development of a coordinated strategy for the delivery of high-quality perinatal care, neonatal and maternal transportation services, education programs for service providers and parents, outreach services to

underserved and at-risk communities, and other relevant services in a cost-effective and accessible way;

- d) establishing appropriate standards for comprehensive perinatal care;
- e) assessing the State's need for services on a community-by-community basis, identifying gaps, and targeting services to fill such gaps and service needs;
- f) evaluating the effectiveness of continuing and proposed community-based initiatives in addressing medical, social, behavioral, and other identified factors influencing infant mortality; and
- g) coordinating and managing relevant data and documentation procedures that support service integration and facilitate quality improvements and outcome evaluations.

6. The Board shall establish sub-committees under the leadership of Board members to conduct the activities of the Board. Each Board member is expected to be involved in the Board's activities and to serve on at least one subcommittee.

7. The Board shall issue periodic reports, including an annual report, addressing issues related to infant mortality, and shall issue such other reports or provide such assistance as the Secretary or the Governor shall require or request.

8. The Board shall be staffed by the Division of Public Health. The Department of Health and Social Services shall provide other staff assistance and support, as appropriate.



APPROVED this 15TH day of November, 1995.

Thomas R. Carpe
Governor

ATTEST:

Gayle J. Cuyler
Assistant Secretary of State