

2026 Conference Highlight

A Million Moments for Maternal Mortality Prevention

Fast Facts

233 Attendees

44 Speakers

21 Sessions

17 Exhibitors

13 Posters



On July 29-30, 2026 the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and a dedicated planning committee hosted the second annual A Million Moments for Maternal Mortality Prevention Conference. The two-day event highlighted the leading causes and contributors to maternal death, including physical and mental health conditions, substance use, intimate partner violence along with evidence-based and innovative prevention strategies.

Twenty-one breakout sessions and 13 poster presentations gave participants practical strategies to build collaboration across disciplines and systems of perinatal care. 93% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the conference helped them identify opportunities to strengthen collaboration



"We cannot undo the losses we remember today, but we can decide what ripples outward from this moment.

We can choose what we carry forward into exam rooms, emergency departments, community spaces, policy conversations, homes and systems of care."

across organizations and sectors, while 90% reported increased understanding of how healthcare, child welfare and community partnerships contribute to maternal mortality prevention. The conference's emphasis on practical tools resonated strongly, with one attendee noting, "I want every mother and family to feel heard, respected and included in decisions about their care. I will continue providing education, connecting families with resources and advocating for early intervention when warning signs are identified. This conference strengthened my commitment to providing compassionate, family-centered care while working collaboratively with other professionals to help prevent maternal morbidity and mortality."

The event expanded participants' awareness of community informed care and the experiences of underserved communities. The Plenary "Beyond the Statistics: Indigenous Voices and National Data on Maternal Health in [Tribal] Communities" prompted attendees to learn more about the challenges facing American Indian and Alaska Native communities and consider how culture and historical trauma can influence engagement with care. Several attendees indicated that, of all the conference sessions, this was the most likely to change their work, noting that "...the depth of issues faced by this population were unknown to me" and committing to improving their own approach to serving these communities by more intentionally considering how others' past experiences can impact their openness to care.

A dedicated Remembrance Ceremony honored those we have lost, and reminded us why this work is important, urgent and impactful. The program included an interactive art installation guided by Kansas City artist, Lula Renee Edwards Smith. Participants left with goals to listen more closely to patients and families, build trust, recognize the impact of stressful experiences and lived experiences and approach care with greater empathy. As one participant reflected, "Every patient is one step away from mistrust in their healthcare. Be gentle. Be kind."



The second annual Maternal Mortality Prevention Conference maintained momentum in strengthening relationships, improving coordination and equipping physicians, clinicians, perinatal care professionals, advocates, peers and researchers with tools to better support mothers, babies and families.

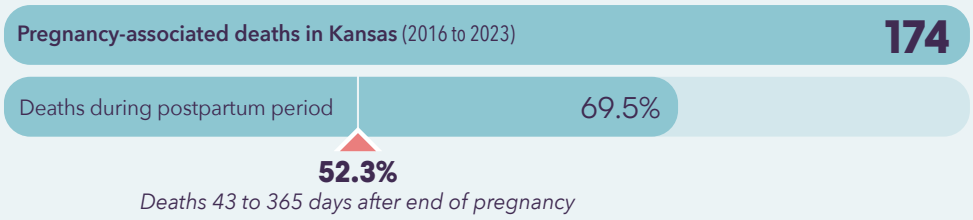
Look for more information about the 2027 event coming soon!

The data tell a story

The ripple of change begins with what we do next.

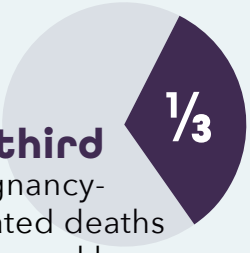
When we understand the factors contributing to maternal mortality, every conversation, every connection and every action has the power to prevent future loss.

Leading Underlying Causes and Contributors



Leading underlying causes

- Motor Vehicle Crashes
- Cardiovascular Conditions *Includes hypertensive disorders*
- Homicide
- Mental Health Conditions *Includes those contributing to suicide*
- Unintentional Poisoning/ Overdose



One-third of pregnancy-associated deaths were caused by:

- Mental health conditions *(including those contributing to suicide)*
- Homicide
- Unintentional poisoning/ overdose

Funding and Partnerships

The 2026 A Million Moments for Maternal Mortality Prevention Conference trained 233 professionals through braided and blending funding, including:

- Kansas Connecting Communities, which is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling $3,750,000 with 10% financed with non-governmental sources.
- The Maternal Anti-Violence Innovation and Sharing (MAVIS) Project, which is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Women's Health as part of an award totaling $3,500,000 with 100% funded by HHS.
- Kansas Maternal Health Innovation project at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, which is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number #U7AMC50508, titled State Maternal Health Innovation.

Scan the QR code to watch the A Million Moments for Maternal Mortality Prevention Conference recap

PSI Postpartum Support International Kansas Chapter

United Methodist HealthMinistryFund

1-800-332-6262 Mental Health Consultation & Resource Network

Empowering clinicians. Elevating patient care.

A Kansas Department of Health and Environment Program

KANSAS COALITION against sexual & domestic violence

MAVIS PROJECT Maternal Anti-Violence Innovation & Sharing

Kansas Maternal Mortality Review Committee

MHI Maternal Health Innovation

KPQC Kansas Perinatal Quality Collaborative

OD2A Overdose to Action

KANSAS MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

KANSAS CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

Kansas Department of Health and Environment

KU THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS Center for Public Partnerships and Research

KU MEDICAL CENTER The University of Kansas

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