

From the Guest Editor

Audrey A. Merriam, MD

Delaware Center for Maternal and Fetal Medicine, ChristianaCare

This issue of the Delaware Journal of Public Health focuses on issues affecting the maternal-child dyad. Efforts to improve both health care and public health policy for children and birthing persons are now being rolled back and devalued at a national level. This makes policy and strategies at the state level even more important, so we can continue to improve health outcomes on a large scale for these vulnerable populations.

This issue opens with a summary of the findings and work of the Delaware Maternal Mortality Review Committee over the past 10 years. This article aggregates data to provide a summary of trends in pregnancy related mortality and examining the intersection of substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health disorders, which are the leading causes of maternal death in the state. The work of this committee has provided important policy recommendations to continue to protect birthing persons in the state. The next article by Hilliard describes the long-standing issues with racism in medicine, particularly in women's health care. The suggestions for improvement at the end of this paper have been implemented by various health care facilities, and may be a contributing factor to the lower percentage of pregnancy associated death experiences by Black, non-Hispanic individuals between 2020-2024 compared to 2015-2019 in Delaware.

The articles by Salvatore, et al, Palmer, and Olsen highlight important interventions in both social and physical health contexts that could serve to improve maternal health and maternal health outcomes for individuals in Delaware. The commentary by Dr. Hoffman on aspirin use in pregnancy reviews how this simple medication could improve maternal and neonatal outcomes through prevention of preeclampsia and preterm birth. Finally, the last article provides important information on another option for increasing education in this era of vaccine hesitancy and misinformation from a global perspective. Although, this systematic review includes articles from multiple countries, there are important take aways that may be able to be implanted in Delaware, especially given the large number of private schools.

I hope this issue highlights important issues facing maternal and child health, both nationally and in the State of Delaware. At this time where national policy is increasingly rolling back protections for these populations, state policy and local health care measures are becoming exceedingly important to ensure we continue to move the needle on outcomes for children and birthing persons.

Copyright (c) 2025 Delaware Academy of Medicine and Public Health.

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>) which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.