**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 44-1-310, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE MATERNAL MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY REVIEW COMMITTEE, SO AS TO CHANGE THE OPERATION OF THE COMMITTEE BY ASSIGNING CERTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES TO STAFF OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL, TO PROVIDE FUNDING CONTINGENCIES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 44‑1‑310 of the 1976 Code amended to read:

Section 44‑1‑310. (A) The Department of Health and Environmental Control shall establish a Maternal Morbidity and Mortality Review Committee to review maternal deaths and to develop strategies for the prevention of maternal deaths. The committee must be multidisciplinary and composed of members deemed appropriate by the department. The committee also may review severe maternal morbidity. The department may contract with an external organization to assist in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating maternal mortality information, organizing and convening meetings of the committee, and performing other tasks as may be incident to these activities, including providing the necessary data, information, and resources to ensure successful completion of the ongoing review required by this section.

(B) The State Registrar shall provide the following necessary data from death certificates of women who died within a year of pregnancy to the department staff for review to assist in identifying maternal death information:

(1) name;

(2) date and time of death;

(3) state and county of residence;

(4) date of birth;

(5) marital status;

(6) citizenship status;

(7) United States armed forces veteran status;

(8) educational background;

(9) race and ethnicity;

(10) date and time of injury;

(11) place of injury;

(12) location where injury occurred;

(13) place of death (facility name and/or address);

(14) manner of death;

(15) whether an autopsy was performed and findings available as to the cause of death;

(16) whether tobacco contributed to death;

(17) primary and contributing causes of death.

(C) The State Registrar shall provide the following necessary data from birth certificates or fetal death reports linked to the woman for whom data from the death certificate was provided pursuant to subsection (B), where available, to department staff for review to assist in identifying maternal death information:

(1) medical record number;

(2) date of delivery;

(3) location of event;

(4) name of mother;

(5) mother’s date of birth;

(6) mother’s race and ethnicity;

(7) mother’s pregnancy history;

(8) mother’s height and weight;

(9) date of last normal menstrual period;

(10) date of first prenatal visit;

(11) number of prenatal visits;

(12) plurality;

(13) use of WIC during pregnancy;

(14) delivery payment method;

(15) cigarette smoking before and during pregnancy;

(16) risk factors during pregnancy;

(17) infections present or treated during pregnancy;

(18) onset of labor;

(19) obstetric procedures;

(20) characteristics of labor and delivery;

(21) maternal morbidity.

(D) The department must not disclose any information that would identify the mother or baby with anyone outside the department, including the committee. Identifying information includes, but may not be limited to, names, addresses more specific than the county of residence, medical record numbers, and dates and times of birth or death.

(E) The department, or its representatives, on behalf of the committee, shall:

(1) extract necessary data elements from death certificates and birth certificates or fetal death report, as applicable, and provide de‑identified information to the committee for its review and consideration;

(2) review and abstract medical records and other relevant data;

(3) contact family members and other affected or involved persons to collect additional data.

(F) The committee shall:

(1) ~~identify maternal death cases, as defined as a death within one year of pregnancy with a direct or indirect causation related to the pregnancy or postpartum period~~ review information and records provided by the department;

(2) ~~review medical records and other relevant data~~ determine whether maternal death cases reviewed are pregnancy related, as defined as a death within one year of the pregnancy with a direct or indirect causation related to the pregnancy or postpartum period;

(3) ~~contact family members and other affected or involved persons to collect additional data;~~

~~(4)~~ consult with relevant experts to evaluate the records and data;

~~(5)~~(4) make determinations regarding the preventability of maternal deaths;

~~(6)~~(5) develop recommendations for the prevention of maternal deaths; and

~~(7)~~(6) disseminate findings and recommendations pursuant to subsection ~~(F)~~(J).

~~(C)~~(G)(1) Health care providers and pharmacies licensed pursuant to Title 40 shall provide reasonable access to the department and its representatives, on behalf of the committee, to all relevant medical records associated with a case under review by the committee.

(2) A health care provider, health care facility, or pharmacy providing access to medical records pursuant to this subsection are not liable for civil damages or subject to criminal or disciplinary action for good faith efforts in providing the records.

(3) Coroners and law enforcement shall provide reasonable access to the department and its representatives, on behalf of the committee, to all relevant records associated with a case under review by the committee.

~~(D)~~(H)(1) Information, records, reports, statements, notes, memoranda, or other data collected pursuant to this section are not admissible as evidence in any action of any kind in any court or before another tribunal, board, agency, or person. The information, records, reports, statements, notes, memoranda, or other data must not be exhibited nor their contents disclosed, in whole or in part, by an officer or a representative of the department or another person, except as necessary for the purpose of furthering the review of the committee of the case to which they relate. A person participating in a review may not disclose the information obtained except in strict conformity with the review project.

(2) All information, records of interviews, written reports, statements, notes, memoranda, or other data obtained by the department, the committee, and other persons, agencies, or organizations authorized by the department pursuant to this section are confidential.

~~(E)~~(I)(1) All proceedings and activities of the committee, opinions of members of the committee formed as a result of the proceedings and activities, and records obtained, created, or maintained pursuant to this section, including records of interviews, written reports, and statements procured by the department or another person, agency, or organization acting jointly or under contract with the department in connection with the requirements of this section, are confidential and are not subject to the provisions of Chapter 4, Title 30 relating to open meetings or public records, or subject to subpoena, discovery or introduction into evidence in any civil or criminal proceeding. However, this section must not be construed to limit or restrict the right to discover or use in any civil or criminal proceeding anything that is available from another source and entirely independent of the committee’s proceedings.

(2) Members of the committee must not be questioned in a civil or criminal proceeding regarding the information presented in or opinions formed as a result of a meeting or communication of the committee. However, this section must not be construed to prevent a member of the committee from testifying to information obtained independently of the committee or which is public information.

~~(F)~~(J) Reports of aggregated nonindividually identifiable data for the previous calendar year must be compiled and disseminated by March first of the following year in an effort to further study the causes and problems associated with maternal deaths. Reports must be distributed to the General Assembly, the Director of the Department of Health and Environmental Control, health care providers and facilities, key governmental agencies, and others necessary to reduce the maternal death rate.

~~(G)~~(K) Members shall serve without compensation, and are ineligible for the usual mileage, subsistence, and per diem allowed by law for members of state boards, committees, and commissions.

(L) The department shall apply for and use any available federal or private monies to help fund the costs associated with implementing the provisions of this section.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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