
SENATE BILL 6534

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Senators O'Ban and Becker

Read first time 01/25/16. Referred to Committee on Health Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing a maternal mortality review
2 panel; and adding a new section to chapter 70.54 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 70.54
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 (1) For the purposes of this section, "maternal mortality" or
7 "maternal death" means a death of a woman while pregnant or within
8 one year following the end of pregnancy, whether or not the woman's
9 death is a result of the pregnancy.

10 (2) A maternal mortality review panel is established to conduct
11 comprehensive, multidisciplinary reviews of maternal deaths in
12 Washington to identify factors associated with the deaths and make
13 recommendations for system changes to improve health care services
14 for women in this state. The members of the panel must be appointed
15 by the secretary of the department of health, must serve without
16 compensation, and must include:

- 17 (a) An obstetrician;
18 (b) A physician specializing in maternal fetal medicine;
19 (c) A neonatologist;
20 (d) A midwife;

1 (e) An advanced registered nurse practitioner who practices in
2 obstetrics;

3 (f) A representative from the department of health who works in
4 the field of maternal and child health;

5 (g) A department of health epidemiologist with experience
6 analyzing perinatal data;

7 (h) A medical examiner;

8 (i) A representative of the community mental health centers; and
9 (j) A member of the public.

10 (3) The maternal mortality review panel must conduct
11 comprehensive, multidisciplinary reviews of maternal mortality in
12 Washington. The panel may not call witnesses or take testimony from
13 any individual involved in the investigation of a maternal death or
14 enforce any public health standard or criminal law or otherwise
15 participate in any legal proceeding relating to a maternal death.

16 (4)(a) The maternal mortality review panel's proceedings,
17 records, and opinions are confidential and are not subject to
18 disclosure under chapter 42.56 RCW. Panel members may not be
19 questioned in any civil or criminal proceeding regarding the
20 information presented in or opinions formed as a result of a meeting
21 of the panel. This subsection does not prevent a member of the panel
22 from testifying to information obtained independently of the panel or
23 which is public information.

24 (b) The maternal mortality review panel and the secretary of the
25 department of health may retain identifiable information regarding
26 facilities where maternal deaths occur and geographic information on
27 each case solely for the purposes of trending and analysis over time.
28 All individually identifiable information must be removed before any
29 case review by the panel.

30 (5) Health care providers, health care facilities, clinics,
31 laboratories, and medical examiners must report maternal deaths to
32 the maternal mortality review panel and to the secretary of the
33 department of health. If a root cause analysis of a maternal death
34 has been completed, the findings of the analysis must be included in
35 the records supplied to the panel.

36 (6) By July 1, 2017, and annually thereafter, the maternal
37 mortality review panel must submit a report to the secretary of the
38 department of health and the health care committees of the senate and
39 house of representatives. The report must protect the confidentiality

1 of all decedents and other participants involved in any incident. The
2 report must include the following:

3 (a) A description of the adverse events reviewed by the panel
4 during the preceding twelve months, including statistics and causes;

5 (b) Correction action plans to address adverse events; and

6 (c) Recommendations for system changes and legislation relating
7 to the delivery of health care in Washington.

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