

Fetal and Infant Mortality Review

Nurse-midwives around the country have been active members of Fetal and Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) programs, contributing their special skills and expertise to this important work. This *QuickInfo* was developed to highlight the importance of the FIMR Program and to direct interested midwives to additional resources.

What is FIMR?

FIMR is a process that brings together a multi-disciplinary community team to review identity-protected records of infant and fetal deaths. Composed of health, social service and other experts, the FIMR case review team examines the significant social, economic, cultural, safety and health systems factors associated with fetal and infant mortality through review of individual cases. A community action team, comprised of community leaders representing government, consumers, key institutions, health and human services organizations then reviews recommendations, prioritizes identified issues, designs and implements interventions to improve outcomes for families.

As described on a Fact Sheet from the National Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Program, FIMR is:

- a strategy to close the gap in health disparities at the community level
- a timely and valuable source of information about changing health care systems and how they affect real families trying to access them
- a community coalition that promotes volunteerism and good citizenship and will translate into local accountability
- a community coalition that can represent all ethnic and cultural views in the community
- a strategy that improves communication among health and human service providers
- a form of continuous quality improvement that allows communities to assess the performance of systems and the impact of changes in those systems
- a voice for local families who have lost their baby
- a tool that helps local health officials implement policies to safeguard families
- a program endorsed by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation and the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

National Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Program

The best source of information about FIMR is the office of the National Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Program (NFIMR). The NFIMR Program is a partnership between the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the federal Maternal Child Health Bureau. NFIMR Program technical materials, announcements, and other information are posted on their webpage,

http://www.acog.org/departments/dept_web.cfm?recno=10. You may also contact :

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The Program publishes a newsletter, *Making Healthy Communities Happen*, that can be accessed online from the NFIMR web site, http://www.acog.org/departments/dept_web.cfm?recno=10. .

ACOG and NFIMR have published “The Fetal Infant Mortality Review Process: The HIPAA Privacy Regulations”, February 2003. Copies are available by writing to NFIMR at the address above and may be downloaded at: http://www.acog.org/from_home/departments/NFIMRHIPAAPrivacyRegs.pdf.

References

Baltay M, McCormick MC, Wise PH. Implementation of Fetal and Infant Mortality Review (FIMR): experience from the National Healthy Start Program. *Maternal and Child Health Journal* 1999;3(3) 141-50

Buckley K, Chapin JL. Fetal and Infant Mortality Review: an evolving process. *Maternal and Child Health Journal*. 1999; 3(3):173

The NFIMR Program maintains bibliographies related to topics of interest to FIMR projects. They are available on the NFIMR web site http://www.acog.org/departments/dept_notice.cfm?recno=10&bulletin=2074.

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The ACNM “*QuickInfo*” series was developed by the Department of Professional Services to respond to common inquiries, summarizing ACNM resources regarding a particular topic, as well as listing selected literature and a variety of other resources. Your feedback is welcomed; contact Professional Services at 240-485-1800 or info@acnm.org. 5/6/03