BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Shawana Moore,
DNP, MSN, WHNP-BC, PNAP
President

Komkwuan P. Paruchabutr,
DNP, FNP-BC, WHNP-BC, CNM, FACNM
President-Elect

Allyssa Harris,
RN, PhD, WHNP-BC
Secretary

Heather Quaile,
DNP, WHNP-BC, SANE
Treasurer

Angela Alston,
DNP, MPH, APRN-CNP, WHNP-BC, FNP-BC

Danielle Grimm,
MPH, MSN, CNP, WHNP-BC

Mary Hickey,
EdD, WHNP-BC, FNP-BC

Kahlil Demonbreun,
DNP, RNC-OB, WHNP-BC, ANP-BC, FAANP, FAAN

Ginny Moore,
DNP, WHNP-BC

Kathryn (Kathy) Trotter,
DNP, CNM, FNP, FAANP, FAAN

Jessica Wells,
PhD, RN, WHNP-BC, FAAN

Genevieve Hofmann,
DNP, WHNP-BC

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Heather L. Maurer,
MA, CAE

For Immediate Release: July 31st, 2023
Media Contact: Emily Wagner, EWagner@NPWH.org

NPWH Joins Leading Women's Healthcare Organizations in Urgent Appeal to Reinstate Idaho's Maternal Mortality Review Committee

Washington, DC - The National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women's Health (NPWH) is proud to join together with other prominent women's healthcare organizations in advocating for the reinstatement of Idaho's Maternal Mortality Review Committee (MMRC). Along with the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM), the Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN), and the American Nursing Association (ANA), NPWH has sent **a letter to Idaho policymakers** asking them to reinstate Idaho's MMRC.

On July 1, 2023, Idaho became the only state without a legal requirement or specialized committee to review maternal deaths related to pregnancy, marking a concerning development in the state's maternal care landscape. According to Idaho's final MMRC report issued in June 2023, 15 of Idaho's 17 maternal deaths were preventable. Eliminating the MMRC will prohibit further information as to the factors driving future maternal deaths, and importantly, interventions to save women's lives.

"Maternal mortality is a nationwide crisis, and Idaho's decision to sunset the Maternal Mortality Review Committee is deeply concerning. As board-certified Women's Health Nurse Practitioners (WHNP-BC), we are dedicated to advancing excellence in women's healthcare. MMRCs play a pivotal role in promoting evidence-based care and enhancing maternal health outcomes." Dr. Shawana Moore, DNP, MSN, CRNP, WHNP-BC, PNAP, President of the NPWH Board of Directors, expressed her concern about Idaho's decision and the need for MMRCs.

"The MMRC provides valuable insights into pregnancy-related complications leading to maternal deaths. Its reinstatement is crucial. We are very worried about the possibility of other states following suit, and the lives that would be lost if this becomes a trend."

With 47.7% of counties in Idaho designated as maternity care deserts and 56.8% lacking a single obstetric provider, access to essential maternal care services remains a significant concern for many in the state, assuring access to care before pregnancy, during pregnancy, and first-year postpartum, and between pregnancies supports access to important health care services that optimize keep women healthy and optimize pregnancy outcomes.

Every state in the U.S. – with the exception, now, of Idaho – has an MMRC. These committees are tasked with identifying contributing factors to maternal fatalities, enhancing care protocols, and preventing future deaths. They are made up of an interdisciplinary team of healthcare providers including physicians, advanced-practice clinicians, midwives, nurses, social workers, coroners, emergency medical services providers, and public health representatives. In many states, MMRCs specifically require the participation of a WHNP-BC.

WHNP-BCs are board-certified advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) with comprehensive education and preparation to provide healthcare to women throughout their lifespans. They are uniquely qualified to care for patients with uncomplicated and high-risk pregnancies – before, during, between, and after births, and are key members of the maternity care team. They provide invaluable expertise on MMRCs and are a critical component of strengthening our maternal health workforce so we can turn around the dangerous trend of maternal mortality in the US.

NPWH remains steadfast in its commitment to collaborating with policymakers and stakeholders to advance women's and maternal health. We will continue advocating for evidence-based solutions that improve maternal care and reduce maternal mortality rates across the country.

~~~

NPWH serves as the professional association for Women's Health Nurse Practitioners (WHNPs) and all APRNs who deliver comprehensive and complex women's and gender-related care. With over 12,000 WHNPs nationwide, NPWH is the leading voice for healthcare providers dedicated to women's health and well-being. The association establishes and upholds national education and practice standards, ensuring that WHNPs deliver high-quality, gender-inclusive care.
~~~