

NPASS Policy Recommendation

National Perinatal Association Student Society Supports
a Plan to Address Postpartum Depression



Policy Recommendation:

The National Perinatal Association Student Society (NPASS) and the National Perinatal Association (NPA) recommend enacting TX HB253, relating to a strategic plan to address postpartum depression. Postpartum depression and perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs) are prevalent and serious medical and public health problem. NPASS and NPA urge the Texas legislators to address this public health crisis.

Background:

- Postpartum depression is clinical depression that affects 10-15% of women after childbirth and is associated with poor health outcomes for mothers and infants.¹ Postpartum depression (PPD) is the most common medical complication of childbirth.¹
- In the 2018 Texas Department State Health Services report on maternal morbidity and mortality, postpartum depression was the most identified mental health condition contributing to pregnancy-related death.¹
- According to the data the leading causes of death for women in the first 365 deaths postpartum were suicide, homicide, and drug overdose – all of which are associated with mental health and wellbeing.²
- Mild and moderate-to-severe depression symptoms can develop and continue through the first two years postpartum.³
- There are verified and effective screening questionnaires - including the PRAMS-6 and PHQ-9 – that can effectively identify women who are experiencing the treatable symptoms of postpartum depression.⁴

The National Perinatal Association and the National Perinatal Association Student Society urge Texas legislators to enact TX HB253 and improve access to postpartum depression medical care in Texas.

Analysis:

Postpartum depression is a prevalent and serious medical condition. Although there are effective screening and treatment options available, many providers still fail to be properly screen, identify, and/or treat patients with postpartum depression. As a result, these patients and their families suffer serious medical and personal consequences. If we can increase screening and treatment for postpartum depression, we can alleviate a great burden borne by the people of Texas.

Conclusion:

The National Perinatal Association and the National Perinatal Association Student Society urge Texas legislators to enact TX HB253 and improve access to postpartum depression medical care in Texas.

1 Maternal Mortality and Morbidity Task Force and Dept. of State Health Services Joint Biennial Report. www.dshs.texas.gov/mch/MMMTFJointReport2018x. Published 2018. Accessed Feb. 1, 2019.

2 Regional Analysis of Maternal and Infant Health in Texas. www.dshs.texas.gov/.../02-Regional-Analysis-of-Maternal-and-Infant-Health-in-Texas. Published 2018. Accessed Feb. 1, 2019.

3 Mayberry, L. J., J. A. Horowitz, and E. Declercq. 2007. "Depression symptom prevalence and demographic risk factors among U.S. women during the first 2 years postpartum." *J Obstet Gynecol Neonatal Nurs*, 36 (6):542-9. doi: 10.1111/j.1552-6909.2007.00191.x.

4 Davis, K., Pearlstein, T., Stuart, S., O'Hara, M., & Zlotnick, C. (2013). Analysis of brief screening tools for the detection of postpartum depression: Comparisons of the PRAMS 6-item instrument, PHQ-9, and structured interviews. *Archives of Womens Mental Health*, 16(4), 271-277. doi:10.1007/s00737-013-0345-z.