



**STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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710 JAMES ROBERTSON PARKWAY
NASHVILLE, TN 37243

BILL LEE
GOVERNOR

RALPH ALVARADO, MD, FACP
COMMISSIONER

February 28, 2025

Dear Colleague,

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of maternal mortality in the United States, accounting for over one-third of all pregnancy-related deaths. According to the most recent Tennessee Maternal Mortality Report (MMR), one of the leading causes of pregnancy-related deaths was cardiovascular disease, with many deemed preventable. To prevent future pregnancy-related deaths from cardiovascular conditions, the Committee has recommended that all care environments implement the Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health (AIM) Cardiac Conditions in Obstetrical Care patient safety bundle. AIM is a national, data-driven maternal safety and quality improvement initiative based on proven safety and quality improvement strategies to improve maternal outcomes and save lives.

The Tennessee Initiative for Perinatal Quality Care (TIPQC) is the state's perinatal quality improvement collaborative, working with birthing hospitals to implement AIM bundles. The collaborative recently launched the AIM Cardiac Conditions in Obstetric Care (CCOC) bundle in eight birthing facilities. Tennessee is the second state to tackle this massive project. The cardiac bundle requires partnership and collaboration beyond maternal care providers and systems. Successful implementation depends on the involvement of cardiologists to help establish a system of coordinated consultation, patient navigation, co-management of care, and transfer to higher levels of care when indicated. An important component of the cardiac bundles is the creation of a statewide referral network for pregnant and post-partum women with or at risk for cardiac conditions. We need cardiologists who provide care to women during pregnancy and postpartum to participate and add their practice information to the Tennessee Cardiologist Referral Network, the statewide obstetric/cardiology referral system. This system will provide maternal care providers consultations and referrals for pregnant and post-partum patients.

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As Commissioner and physician, I urge cardiologists to join the implementation of the AIM Cardiac Conditions in Obstetrical Care patient safety bundle by joining the Cardiac Consultation and Referral Network. With your help, we can establish a system to ensure maternal patients with or at risk for cardiac conditions receive needed referrals and interventions to prevent maternal morbidity and mortality. Thank you for all you do to protect the health and lives of Tennesseans.

Please contact TIPQC and visit the TIPQC website to learn more about joining the Cardiac Consultation and Referral network.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Alvarado", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ralph Alvarado, MD, FACP
Commissioner

RA/mhp

CC: Dr. Tobi Amosun, Deputy Commissioner for Population Health
Dr. Elizabeth Harvey, Assistant Commissioner for Family Health and Wellness