

MEDICAL STUDENTS FOR CHOICE

Maternal Mortality

The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) refers to the number of women, trans men, and gender non-conforming people who die from pregnancy or childbirth related causes for every 100,000 live births. Unsafe abortion is one leading causes of preventable maternal death. Though the [global MMR dropped by 38%](#) between 2000-2017, maternal mortality remains a serious problem in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, where approximately [86% of maternal deaths occurred in 2017](#). Pregnant people in these regions tend to live in more rural areas, experience poverty, and overall have less access to skilled health workers. [In 2017](#), the MMR in low-income countries was 462 per 100,000 live births, versus 11 per 100,000 live births in high-income countries. By hosting an event on maternal mortality, your chapter can discuss both how access to safe, legal abortion is linked to a decline in the MMR, and how worldwide disparities create drastically different outcomes for patients of different nationalities; as well as patients of different economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds.

Event ideas:

- Host a talk about maternal mortality in your region/country (including racial breakdowns, if the data are available). Some areas have taskforces on maternal health or mortality/morbidity – if your area does, ask any local participants to come speak at your school.
- Discuss the role of unsafe abortion in the maternal mortality rate; and the racial, economic, and regional disparities in maternal mortality rates within your region/country or globally.
- Invite a reproductive justice or reproductive policy speaker to present on the causes of maternal mortality.

Resources:

- [Preventing Maternal Mortality: The Role of Safe Abortion Presentation](#)
- [Preventing Maternal Mortality Lesson Guide](#)
- [OECD Stats – Health Status: Maternal and infant mortality](#)
- [UNICEF: Maternal and Newborn Health Disparities country profiles](#)
- [Unsafe Abortion: The Missing Link in Global Efforts to Improve Maternal Health](#)
- [From Risks to Rights: Realizing States' Obligations to Prevent Maternal Mortality](#)
- [Global Trends in Maternal Mortality Between 1990-2015](#)
- WHO:
 - [Maternal mortality fact sheet](#)
 - [Trends in maternal mortality: 1990 to 2015](#)
 - [Maternal Mortality Statistics and Map](#)
 - [Maternal deaths decline slowly with vast inequities worldwide](#)
 - [Infographic: Saving mothers' lives](#)

A month prior to the event...

- Choose a date that works with your school schedule and with the schedule of a faculty member, practitioner, resident or experienced medical student who can lead the event.
- Reserve a room.
- Advertise!

After the event...

- Follow up with MSFC by sending us photos, a testimonial, or a short write-up to students@msfc.org!