

Item Title: Wake County Child Fatality Prevention Team/Community Child Protection Team (CFPT/CCPT) Annual Report For 2016

Specific Action Requested:

That the Board of Commissioners receives and reviews the annual Childhood Fatality report from the Wake County Child Fatality Prevention Team/Community Child Protection Team (CFPT/CCPT). This report describes causes of childhood mortality for Wake County in 2015, and recommends potential system interventions to reduce the likelihood of future deaths.

Item Summary:

Wake County's CFPT/CCPT performs regular confidential reviews of representative deaths of infants and children age 17 or younger seeking systematic causes or conditions that can be prevented and suggesting public policy and programmatic solutions.

This 2016 report presents infant and child mortality rates for the year 2015. State and county wide data are compiled and reported by the North Carolina Center for Health Statistics a full year after the calendar events. Representative 2015 child deaths were reviewed by the Wake County CFPT/CCPT throughout the 2016 year.

There was an increase in the total number of Wake County Child deaths from 96 (in both 2013 and 2014) to 105 in 2015. Among children aged 1-17, injury accounted for more deaths (18) than illness (14). Violent deaths (suicide and homicide) accounted for nearly half of the injury deaths overall.

The largest category of deaths continued to occur in infancy, before the first birthday. The infant mortality rate in Wake County was 5.7 per 1000 births overall, much better than the statewide rate of 7.3, and below the national rate of 6.0. Although the Black Infant Mortality Rate improved from 12.5 to 11.4, it remained above the national rate of 10.8 and well above the Healthy People 2020 goal of 6.0.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) lists the top five causes of infant mortality as: birth defects, preterm births, maternal complications, SIDS, and injuries. Wake County received a "C" from the March of Dimes for its premature delivery rate, and North Carolina ranks 44th in terms of racial and ethnic disparities in preterm births. The CDC lists several ways to reduce premature delivery and infant mortality, including folic acid supplementation, improving maternal physical and mental health, reducing exposure to tobacco and other substances, assuring access to contraception, and addressing interpersonal violence.

The Wake County CFPT/CCPT is currently involved in a number of initiatives designed to reduce infant mortality.

First, Wake County Human Services is developing a practice to integrate screening for social service needs into all public health clinic encounters. Specifically, clients will be screened for food and housing insecurity, interpersonal violence, mental health and substance use concerns, and lack of access to healthcare. Clients who report needs in these areas will be connected to appropriate services. This initiative has the potential to reduce mortality in both infants and older children.

Second, the CFPT/CCPT is working with Wake County hospital Emergency Departments to improve recognition, reporting, and protection of children who present with history or physical findings concerning for the possibility of non-accidental trauma (child abuse). Although children of any age can be victims of non-accidental trauma, infants are at highest risk of serious injury and death from this cause.

Third, the CFPT/CCPT has reached out to homeless and disaster shelters with education and supplies to improve the safety of infant sleep environments (e.g., pack and play cribs).

In addition, the CFPT/CCPT is partnering with community non-profits to disseminate injury prevention information to both infants and older children, and with the Wake County Public School System to disseminate violence prevention information that addresses dating violence, human trafficking, and suicide prevention.

Attachments:

1. Cover Letter for County Commissioners/Board of Health Annual Reports
2. CFPT Annual Report for 2016
3. Child Fatalities in Wake County
4. Wake County CFPT/CCPT Membership List per General Statute 7B-1407