

# Fetal & Infant Mortality Review

*"No Foot Is So Small that it Cannot Leave an IMPRINT on this World"*

## Who we are and what we do:

If you recently experienced the loss of a baby during pregnancy or in early infancy, the FIMR Program extends our deepest sympathy. There simply are not words to express the depth of sorrow after such a loss.

The FIMR Program provides support to parents and families whose lives had been affected by the tragic death of a child or loss of a pregnancy.

The FIMR Program also attempts to learn more about the causes and factors, medical and non-medical, related to these early deaths. This information helps local agencies improve or develop better services to address the needs of women, infants and families.

We conduct complete reviews of each individual medical record to assess for gaps in services or barriers to access to needed services

We gain the **most valuable** information by interviewing the mothers and families who have recently experienced the loss of a baby during pregnancy or early infancy and are open to sharing their story.

As a parent, only **you** can tell us your story and what your experiences with medical and social service providers were like.

These stories help us examine existing services for infants, pregnant women, and families and understand **what services families need and how successful they are at getting them.**

Parents who have participated in an interview often say that it was a positive experience. It honors their baby's short life as well as the memory of their precious child.



## Our Process:



Our trained interviewer will sit down with you to speak in a setting you're most comfortable with. This can be your home, place of work, our office at the Health Department, or a public area (such as a park). We can also conduct interviews virtually or by phone.

The interview typically takes about an hour, though it can be longer or shorter and you're free to end it at any time. You don't have to answer any questions you're not comfortable with.

You'll be asked about your life before and during the pregnancy, your prenatal care, your labor and delivery experience, postpartum care, and your interactions with other programs you may have been involved with or referred to (such as grief counseling). If your baby passed away as an infant, you'll also be asked about your experiences with the baby at home and the care and services you utilized or **needed** while he or she was alive.

Your story, in your words, is added to the case summary which has been completely de-identified-no names are ever shared of you, your baby, your doctor, or medical facilities.

A team of local professionals reviews each case and determines gaps, trends and barriers that might impact access to services. Community planning is then completed to address the identified issues.



Increasing the **R**ate of **I**nfant **S**urvival  
Chattanooga-Hamilton County Health Department

### Some of the things we look at or may ask about during the interview include:

Are there enough providers and medical services for parents and babies?

Can existing medical care or services can be improved? If so, how?

What is the effect of the home/work environment on the health of pregnant women and babies?

Do any barriers exist that prevent women and infants from receiving appropriate care in our community?

## Taking care of yourself is important.

This experience may be overwhelming for the whole family and at times you may feel alone. Here are some suggestions for taking care of yourself:

**Sleep:** Give yourself plenty of time to rest. Grief is emotionally and physically draining.

**Exercise:** Take walks or exercise frequently. Physical activity can reduce stress and may give you time to gather your thoughts.

**Talk with others:** Consider seeking out others, through support groups, church groups, family or friends.

**Cry, cry, and cry:** Tears are very healing. You don't have to cry in front of others, however, sometimes in the deepest of grief it helps to cry with another person present.

**Honor your feelings: Embrace your emotions.** They may range from anger to sorrow to hope; everyone reacts differently.

**Don't expect to "get over it."** You will begin to experience happy times again in your life, but you probably will never "get over it." It is a gentle and gradual acceptance that happens over many years

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## *What FIMR IS*

- ♥ *An examination of social, economic, public health, education, environmental, and safety factors that contribute to the tragedy of fetal and infant loss*
- ♥ *A chance for your baby's story to be told, and your voice preserved.*

## *What FIMR is NOT*

- ♥ *Judgement or blame. We look at systems, services, resources (or lack thereof), and disparities and look for ways to improve these things in our community. We are not social services or law enforcement.*
  - ♥ *Professional counseling, though referrals and resources can be provided if needed.*
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### We can provide:

- **Support** needed for emotional, physical, spiritual and social healing,
- **Referrals** to resources needed immediately after a death, and
- **Information** and emotional support to help deal with grief and other emotions following the death of a baby.



## Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Program

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