

# **DRAFT RESOLUTION OF THE TENNESSEE PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION**

## **Support of CDC's Recommendations to Improve Preconception Health and Health Care**

WHEREAS, preconception care is recognized as a critical component of health care for women of reproductive age and can greatly influence good birth outcomes and overall maternal health<sup>1</sup>, and

WHEREAS, preconception care should be an essential part of primary and preventive care, addressing medication use, nutritional status, screening for genetic disorders, communicable diseases, tobacco and drug use and domestic violence<sup>2</sup>, and

WHEREAS, maternal and child health outcomes such as maternal and infant mortality, preterm births and low birth weight babies, are often used as indicators of the overall status of health in a population, and

WHEREAS, Tennessee ranks 43<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in infant mortality, 42<sup>nd</sup> in the nation in low birth weight infants and 46<sup>th</sup> in the nation in preterm birth rates<sup>3</sup>, and

WHEREAS, early prenatal care has been found to increase desired birth outcomes with the national goal for the year 2010 being for 90 percent of all births to have prenatal care beginning in the first trimester<sup>4</sup>, and

WHEREAS, only 68.8 percent of women in Tennessee report beginning prenatal care in the first trimester<sup>5</sup>, and

WHEREAS, smoking has been shown to lead to cardiovascular disease, lung disease, premature birth and low birth weight babies, and

WHEREAS, 19.4 percent of Tennessee mothers report having smoked while pregnant, and 24.4 percent of all Tennessee women aged 18 years and older report they are current smokers<sup>5</sup>, and,

WHEREAS, mortality from invasive cervical cancer can be reduced with the use of a Pap test, with the 2010 National objective being that 90 percent of women to have received a Pap test within the preceding year<sup>4</sup>, and

WHEREAS, only 21.5 percent of Tennessee women report having a Pap test within the preceding year<sup>5</sup>, and

WHEREAS, for many of the above indices, non-white Tennessee women and their babies are affected to a much greater extent than their white counterparts<sup>5</sup>, and

WHEREAS, in 2006 the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) established ten recommendations to improve preconception health which are aimed at achieving four goals<sup>2</sup>:

- 1) to improve the knowledge and attitudes and behaviors of men and women related to preconception health
- 2) assure that all women of childbearing age receive preconception care services
- 3) reduce risks indicated by previous adverse pregnancy outcomes for the mother and her future children
- 4) reduce disparities in adverse pregnancy outcomes

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Tennessee Public Health Association supports CDC's recommended strategies to improve preconception health and also supports legislative actions which contribute to the implementation of these strategies and urges members of the Tennessee General Assembly to carefully consider legislation that would promote these strategies and urges health care providers in Tennessee to provide appropriate preconception health services to all women of child bearing age.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be provided to the Commissioner of Health, members of the Tennessee General Assembly, the Tennessee Medical Association, the Tennessee Primary Care Association, the Tennessee Section of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the Tennessee Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and that a copy of this resolution is distributed to all members of the Association.

**References:**

1. Maternal and Child Health Journal. 1997; Vol. 1, no. 1 (ISSN: 1092-7875)
2. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. CDC. 2006; Vol. 55, no. RR-6
3. Kids Count Special Report. Anna B. Casey Foundation. 2004
4. Healthy People 2010 Report. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2000; Vol. 1
5. The Health of Tennessee's Women. Tennessee Department of Health, Office of Policy, Planning and Assessment, Division of Health Statistics. 2005

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