

RCW 74.09.810 Alternative maternity care service delivery system established—Remedial action report.

(1) The authority shall establish an alternative maternity care service delivery system, if it determines that a county or a group of counties is a maternity care distressed area. A maternity care distressed area shall be defined by the authority, in rule, as a county or a group of counties where eligible women are unable to obtain adequate maternity care. The authority shall include the following factors in its determination:

(a) Higher than average percentage of eligible persons in the distressed area who receive late or no prenatal care;

(b) Higher than average percentage of eligible persons in the distressed area who go out of the area to receive maternity care;

(c) Lower than average percentage of obstetrical care providers in the distressed area who provide care to eligible persons;

(d) Higher than average percentage of infants born to eligible persons per obstetrical care provider in the distressed area; and

(e) Higher than average percentage of infants that are of low birth weight, five and one-half pounds or two thousand five hundred grams, born to eligible persons in the distressed area.

(2) If the authority determines that a maternity care distressed area exists, it shall notify the relevant county authority. The county authority shall, within one hundred twenty days, submit a brief report to the authority recommending remedial action. The report shall be prepared in consultation with the authority and with the department's local community service offices, the local public health officer, community health clinics, health care providers, hospitals, the business community, labor representatives, and low-income advocates in the distressed area. A county authority may contract with a local nonprofit entity to develop the report. If the county authority is unwilling or unable to develop the report, it shall notify the authority within thirty days, and the authority shall develop the report for the distressed area.

(3) The authority shall review the report and use it, to the extent possible, in developing strategies to improve maternity care access in the distressed area. The authority may contract with or directly employ qualified maternity care health providers to provide maternity care services, if access to such providers in the distressed area is not possible by other means. In such cases, the authority is authorized to pay that portion of the health care providers' malpractice liability insurance that represents the percentage of maternity care provided to eligible persons by that provider through increased medical assistance payments. [2011 1st sp.s. c 15 s 51; 1989 1st ex.s. c 10 s 6.]

Effective date—Findings—Intent—Report—Agency transfer—References to head of health care authority—Draft legislation—2011 1st sp.s. c 15: See notes following RCW 74.09.010.