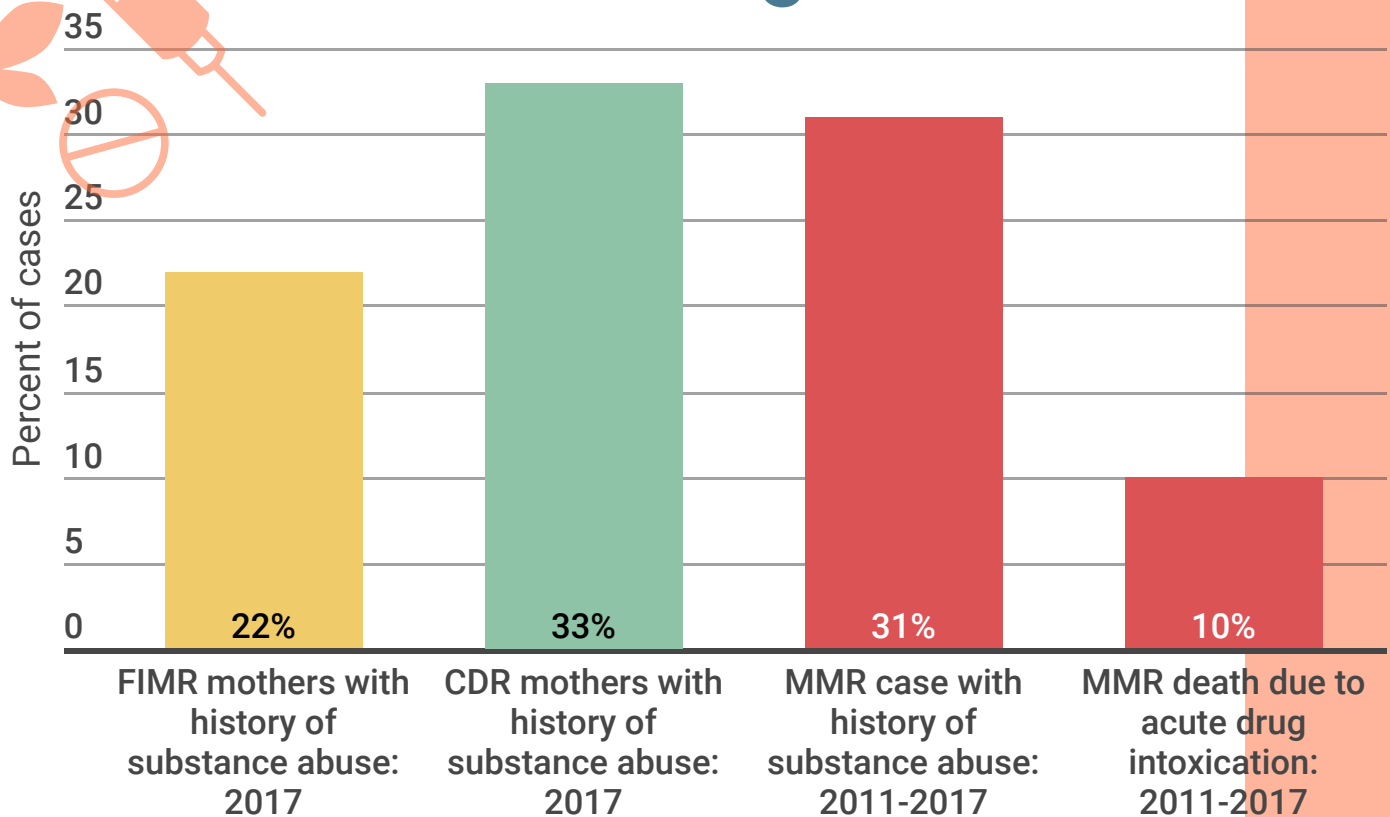


# Substance Abuse

## Issue

Substance abuse is having widespread repercussions on the health of women, children and infants. Lack of screening, referral and access to treatment options for addiction puts individuals at increased risk for poor health outcomes.

## Findings



## Recommendations

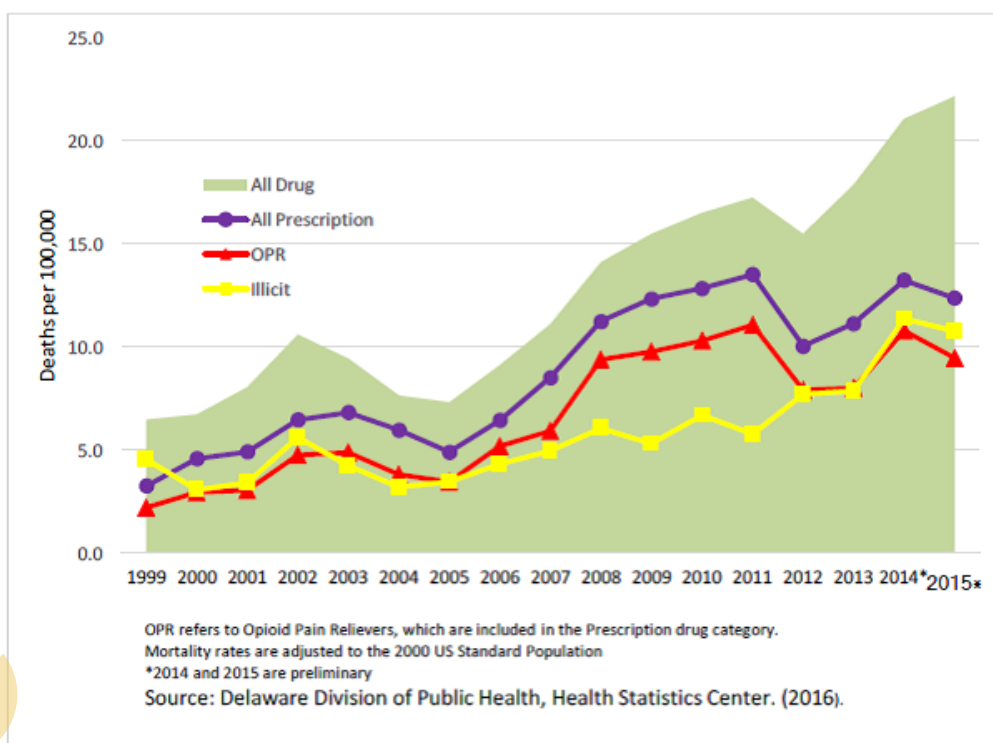
- Increase counseling and referral for substance abuse
- Improve access to treatment options
- Pass legislation HB140 (Aiden's Law) to implement plans of safe care for every substance-exposed infant
- Reduce the stigmatization of selectively applying screening by screening all pregnant and postpartum women for substance abuse

**Refer every patient, every time.**

# Substance Abuse

The upward trend in drug overdose deaths in Delaware has been evident over several years and primarily driven by the uptick in prescription drug deaths. (Figure 3)(3) In 2016, the rate of drug overdose deaths in Delaware increased significantly by 40% to 30.8/100,000 people, well above the overall US rate of 19.8 deaths/100,000 people.(4)(5) There is also reason for concern that rates of drug overdose deaths is rising faster among women in the US. Between 1999 and 2015, the rate of deaths from prescription opioid and heroin overdoses increased twice as fast among women compared to men. Notably, the rate of deaths due to synthetic opioids increased over 8-fold among US women between 1999 and 2015.(6)

Figure 3: Annual age-adjusted drug overdose death rate in Delaware per 100,000 people and by type of drug, 1999-2015 (3)



Maternal substance abuse has been prevalent among MMR cases for several years, found in about one-third of cases reviewed between 2011 and 2017 overall. Also, one-quarter of infant unsafe sleep deaths involved an adult caregiver under the influence of drugs. Clearly parent and caregiver drug use is a concern for the health of women and infants in Delaware and stands to worsen perinatal outcomes.

# Substance Abuse

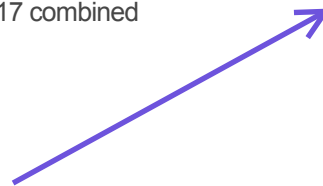
CDR and SDY-cases reviewed	2017	2016
Suicide death: history of substance abuse*	27% (n=11 cases)	
Weapon-related death: victim with history of substance abuse	Not applicable	31%
Child's mother with history of substance abuse	33%	30%
Child's father with history of substance abuse	25%	18%
Substance-exposed infant	6%	19%
Adult caregiver was drug impaired at time of infant unsafe sleep death	25%	26%

\*2016 and 2017 combined



**25%**

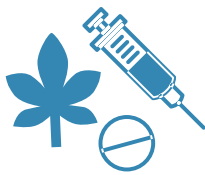
of adult caregivers were drug impaired at the time of an infant unsafe sleep death



FIMR	2017	2016
Mother with history of drug use	15%	11%
Mother with illicit drug use	11%	10%
Mother with substance abuse (past or current)	22%	23%
Father with substance abuse (past or current)	10%	Not recorded
Substance-exposed infant	2%	0%

# Substance Abuse

MMR	2011-2017 (n=29)
Mother with history of substance abuse	31%
Death due to acute drug intoxication	10%



**31%**

of maternal deaths reviewed between 2011-2017 had a history of substance abuse

## MMR: Systems of care--Referral

There is no standard of care for making a referral to social workers when a patient is seen in the Emergency Department with a complication of drug use or discloses a recent drug use history. (2017)

3. Silverman PR, Mack J, et al. The Delaware opioid epidemic. DE J Publ Health 2017; 3(4): 26-33.

4. CDC. Opioid overdose: drug overdose death data. Accessed at: <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/statedeaths.html> on April 19, 2018.

5. CDC National Center for Health Statistics. Drug overdose mortality by state. Accessed at: [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/drug\\_poisoning\\_mortality/drug\\_poisoning.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/drug_poisoning_mortality/drug_poisoning.htm) on April 19, 2018.

6. US Dept of Health and Human Services. Office of Women's Health. Final report: opioid use, misuse, and overdose in women. July 19, 2017. Washington DC. Accessed at: <https://www.womenshealth.gov/files/documents/final-report-opioid-508.pdf> on April 19, 2018.