

**MaineHealth
Local Health Systems**

Franklin Community
Health Network
LincolnHealth
MaineHealth Care At Home
Maine Behavioral Healthcare
Memorial Hospital
Maine Medical Center
NorDx
Pen Bay Medical Center
Southern Maine Health Care
Synernet
Waldo County General Hospital
Western Maine Health

**Part of the
MaineHealth Family**

MaineHealth Accountable
Care Organization

MaineHealth Affiliates

MaineGeneral Health
Mid Coast-Parkview Health
New England Rehabilitation
Hospital of Portland
St. Mary's Health System

**Testimony of Sarah Calder, MaineHealth
in Support of LD 1781
“An Act to Align Postpartum MaineCare Coverage with
Federal Law”
Wednesday, January 12, 2022**

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Sarah Calder, Director of Government Affairs at MaineHealth, and I am here to testify in support of LD 1781, “An Act to Align Postpartum MaineCare Coverage with Federal Law.”

MaineHealth is a non-profit health care system that provides a full continuum of health care services to the residents of eleven counties in Maine and one in New Hampshire. As part of our mission of “Working Together So Maine’s Communities are the Healthiest in America,” we strongly support increasing access to affordable health care. In fact, MaineHealth has established a policy to provide Free Care to all patients with incomes at or below 200% of the poverty level.

With that said, we are grateful to Sen. Anne Carney and the Legislature last Session for their support for extending MaineCare coverage for pregnant women up to 12 months postpartum, and we support the Department’s efforts to align the recently passed law with federal law.

According to the most recent [Maine Maternal, Fetal and Infant Mortality Review Panel Annual Report](#), in 2018-2019, of the pregnancy-associated deaths among Maine women, 77% occurred 43-365 days after the end of pregnancy – in most cases when a woman’s access to MaineCare coverage has ended. 64% of the pregnancy-associated deaths in 2018-2019 were due to injury-related causes, including overdoses, homicides, and suicides, and over 36% were due to a cause related to or aggravated by pregnancy, including cardiovascular diseases, infections, hemorrhages, cardiomyopathy, and embolisms.

Gaps in health insurance coverage during the fourth trimester through the first year can contribute to rising maternal morbidity and mortality rates. Comprehensive care and continuous coverage up to 12 months postpartum are essential, and it is our hope that the legislation passed last Session will prevent many of Maine’s pregnancy-associated deaths.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.