

**§ 247b-11. Effects of folic acid in prevention of birth defects****(a) In general**

The Secretary, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shall expand and intensify programs (directly or through grants or contracts) for the following purposes:

(1) To provide education and training for health professionals and the general public for purposes of explaining the effects of folic acid in preventing birth defects and for purposes of encouraging each woman of reproductive capacity (whether or not planning a pregnancy) to consume on a daily basis a dietary supplement that provides an appropriate level of folic acid.

(2) To conduct research with respect to such education and training, including identifying effective strategies for increasing the rate of consumption of folic acid by women of reproductive capacity.

(3) To conduct research to increase the understanding of the effects of folic acid in preventing birth defects, including understanding with respect to cleft lip, cleft palate, and heart defects.

(4) To provide for appropriate epidemiological activities regarding folic acid and birth defects, including epidemiological activities regarding neural tube defects.

**(b) Consultations with States and private entities**

In carrying out subsection (a), the Secretary shall consult with the States and with other appropriate public or private entities, including national nonprofit private organizations, health professionals, and providers of health insurance and health plans.

**(c) Technical assistance**

The Secretary may (directly or through grants or contracts) provide technical assistance to public and nonprofit private entities in carrying out the activities described in subsection (a).

**(d) Evaluations**

The Secretary shall (directly or through grants or contracts) provide for the evaluation of activities under subsection (a) in order to determine the extent to which such activities have been effective in carrying out the purposes of the program under such subsection, including the effects on various demographic populations. Methods of evaluation under the preceding sentence may include surveys of knowledge and attitudes on the consumption of folic acid and on blood folate levels. Such methods may include complete and timely monitoring of infants who are born with neural tube defects.

**(e) Authorization of appropriations**

For the purpose of carrying out this section, there are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2001 through 2005.

(July 1, 1944, ch. 373, title III, §317J, as added Pub. L. 106-310, div. A, title VI, §601, Oct. 17, 2000, 114 Stat. 1118.)

**§ 247b-12. Safe motherhood****(a) Surveillance****(1) Purpose**

The purposes of this subsection are to establish or continue a Federal initiative to support State and tribal maternal mortality review committees, to improve data collection and reporting around maternal mortality, and to develop or support surveillance systems at the local, State, and national level to better understand the burden of maternal complications and mortality and to decrease the disparities among populations at risk of death and severe complications from pregnancy.

**(2) Activities**

For the purpose described in paragraph (1), the Secretary, acting through the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, may carry out the following activities:

(A) The Secretary may continue and improve activities related to a national maternal mortality data collection and surveillance program to identify and support the review of pregnancy-associated deaths and pregnancy-related deaths that occur during, or within 1 year following, pregnancy.

(B) The Secretary may expand the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System to provide surveillance and collect data in each State.

(C) The Secretary may expand the Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Program to provide technical support, financial assistance, or the time-limited assignment of senior epidemiologists to maternal and child health programs in each State.

(D) The Secretary may, in cooperation with States, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations, develop a program to support States, Indian tribes, and tribal organizations in establishing or operating maternal mortality review committees, in accordance with subsection (d).

**(b) Prevention research****(1) Purpose**

The purpose of this subsection is to provide the Secretary with the authority to further expand research concerning risk factors, prevention strategies, and the roles of the family, health care providers and the community in safe motherhood.

**(2) Research**

The Secretary may carry out activities to expand research relating to—

(A) prepregnancy counseling, especially for at risk populations such as women with diabetes and women with substance use disorder;

(B) the identification of critical components of prenatal delivery and postpartum care;

(C) the identification of outreach and support services, such as folic acid education, that are available for pregnant women;

(D) the identification of women who are at high risk for complications;

(E) preventing preterm delivery;