



Bringing Postpartum Depression Out of the Shadows Act of 2015 (H.R. 3235/S. 2311)

The Bringing Postpartum Depression Out of the Shadows Act of 2015 would increase and improve screening and treatment for women with postpartum depression. The March of Dimes urges Members of Congress to co-sponsor and support the passage of this important bill.

Background

- Postpartum depression is depression related to childbirth, in which a woman may feel hopeless and worthless, and lose interest in her baby. She may have thoughts of hurting yourself or the baby.
- It is estimated that 9-16%, or roughly 1 in 7 new mothers experience postpartum depression. Over 400,000 women suffer from postpartum depression every year, but only 15% of these women receive treatment.
- Postpartum depression can interrupt bonding between mother and child, leading to adverse outcomes for both mother and baby.
 - Some children have difficulties eating and sleeping, and experience delays in language development.
 - Due to maternal disengagement, some infants develop passivity, withdrawal, and self-regulatory behavior.
- 90% of mothers with postpartum depression can be successfully treated, but successful treatment is often hindered by lack of attention, or insufficient education for providers.

Key Bill Provisions

- H.R. 3235 directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make grants available to States to establish, expand, or maintain programs for maternal depression screening and treatment of women who are pregnant, or who have given birth in the past 12 months.
- Eligible programs will offer appropriate training to health care professionals, make available relevant information and resources, and provide enhanced treatment options for women who may be suffering from postpartum depression.

Key Points

- About 1 in 7 new mothers are estimated to experience postpartum depression.
- Evidence-based interventions have proven effective at treating postpartum depression.
- Increasing access to screening for maternal depression will help to increase both treatment and prevention.
- H.R. 3235 will enhance treatment options by helping to integrate specialty care and primary care.
- The March of Dimes supports the Bringing Postpartum Depression Out of the Shadows Act of 2015, and urges members of Congress to cosponsor and support passage of this legislation.

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