

305 Oakland women given prenatal care

One out of every eight infant deaths can be prevented by early and comprehensive prenatal care, according to the Children's Defense Fund, and Oakland County is helping women get the proper health care early in their pregnancies.

Oakland County is performing this task through its Prenatal-Postpartum Care (PPC) Program.

The Oakland County Health Division and the Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency are working cooperatively to administer PPC, which is funded by the Michigan Department of Public Health.

"Our PPC program helped 305 pregnant women from May through December last year who otherwise probably wouldn't have received prenatal care," said Daniel T. Murphy, county executive.

"It is our goal this year to help every eligible pregnant woman who can't afford prenatal care on her own. The county wants to help her have a healthy baby."

GOAL OF THE PPC Program is to remove the financial barrier that

causes pregnant women to delay going for prenatal care.

Getting prenatal care early lowers health risks to women and their babies at delivery.

"We've learned that many of our PPC clients wouldn't receive any prenatal care if they weren't in our program," said Thomas Gordon, acting manager of the county health division.

"We have data on infant death rates which proves that as prenatal visits increase, infant deaths decrease."

"Since our clients are eligible for four prenatal medical visits and one postpartum visit, we believe that participation in our program significantly increases the potential for a woman having a successful pregnancy and delivering a healthy newborn," he added.

THE PPC Program is available to pregnant women in Oakland County who have no third-party insurance covering prenatal-postpartum care or who have maternity insurance with a large deductible. For a family

of four annual income cannot exceed \$19,703.

"If a woman is eligible financially for our PPC Program, then we refer her to one of three obstetric-gynecology clinics," explained Betty Yancey, coordinator of Oakland County's Infant Health Promotion Program.

"In Oakland County, the number of women who qualify for the PPC Program is approximately 760," Yancey added.

They live in communities as diverse in population size, geographical location and relative affluence as Clarkston, Groveland Township, Pontiac, Rochester, Hazel Park and Bloomfield Township.

CLINICS ARE at:

• Providence Hospital, 16001 W. Nine Mile, Southfield.

• St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, 900 Woodward, Pontiac.

• Pontiac General Hospital at Seminole and W. Huron, Pontiac.

Pregnant women enrolled in the PPC Program go regularly to the clinics for checkups throughout their pregnancy and go back for a post-

partum checkup after delivery," added Yancey.

"The postpartum visit is just as important as the others. It gets them back to a doctor for a health assessment and for a discussion about family planning," added Yancey.

To find out more about the PPC Program, call Lori Shaefer, program coordinator, at 585-5133.

Pregnant women also are enrolled in the PPC Program when they go directly to one of the three hospitals for outpatient prenatal care.

"If the hospital's financial clerk sees that a woman can't pay for her prenatal care, then she can enroll her in Oakland County's PPC Program," she explained.

THE NATIONAL infant mortality rate is 10.6 deaths per 1,000 live births. In Michigan that rate is 11.7.

Although the overall infant mortality rate in Oakland County is 10.1, the communities mentioned above have the following rates: Clarkston Village, 23.6; Groveland Township, 23.8; Pontiac, 18.7; Rochester, 17.0; Hazel Park, 14.8; and Bloomfield Township, 14.1.

Of the 60 Oakland County communities listed in the 1980 census, 22 have infant death rates above the national and/or state levels.

These statistics are a three-year average for the years 1982-84. They are compiled from the MDPH Office of Vital and Health Statistics by the Infant Health Promotion Program.

THE PPC Program is conducted by counties throughout Michigan. It was funded in 1985 by the Michigan Legislature.

WSU teaches computers

The Southfield Extension Center of Wayne State University will offer a range of four-week courses in its Personal Computing Center this summer. The WSU building is at 25610 W. 11 Mile.

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Registration information and a free brochure are available from WSU at 577-4665.

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