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HPIO fact sheet offers action steps for eliminating racial disparities in infant mortality

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) – As Gov. Mike DeWine's newly created task force begins work to eliminate racial disparities in Ohio's infant mortality rate, the Health Policy Institute of Ohio has released a fact sheet with action steps that policymakers can take to address the issue.

The new fact sheet titled [Taking action: Eliminating racial disparities in infant mortality](#) highlights that, "For many years, Ohio's infant mortality rate has been higher than most other states... Ohio's policymakers and health leaders have acted on this issue through multiple advisory committees, collaborative efforts, investments, legislation and other policy changes." These efforts contributed to a 10% decline in the overall infant mortality rate from 2009 to 2019. However, racial disparities in Ohio's infant mortality rate have increased.

In December 2020, Gov. Mike DeWine announced the creation of a new task force focused on eliminating racial disparities in infant mortality by 2030. The task force will host listening sessions in 11 counties, providing an opportunity for members to learn about promising programs, evaluation results and barriers to improving maternal and infant health for Black families.

The fact sheet includes troubling infant mortality disparities data and themes from previous recommendations on what can drive change and move Ohio forward. It highlights three action steps that task force members and others can take to eliminate racial disparities in infant mortality. Future efforts must:

- Dismantle racism and address its consequences
- Improve health across the life course, not just pregnancy
- Maintain improvements in access to clinical care, while also advancing meaningful policy changes to improve community conditions

For questions about the fact sheet, or if you would like to talk with authors of the report, please call or text Nick Wiselogel at 614.530.9918 or email nwiselogel@hpio.net.