Tracking COVID-19 during pregnancy in Missouri

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Stories FROM THE Field

CONTRIBUTOR: *Laura Kliethermes, Grants Transformation Director, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services*

CATEGORY: **Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity (ELC)**	CATEGORY: **Interoperable Data Systems**

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services implemented a project to create data sets for the SET-NET program, a surveillance system created by the CDC to detect the effects of health threats to pregnant people and their babies from pregnancy through childhood for various infectious diseases, including COVID-19. Data collected through this program were used by CDC for national reporting, and several academic journal articles published results from the program.

The "What"

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services' (DHSS) Bureaus of Health Care Analysis & Data Dissemination, Data Modernization and Interoperability and Office of Epidemiology worked together to implement a project to create data sets for the Surveillance for Emerging Threats to Mothers and Babies Network (SET-NET) program in 2020 when the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) first made funding available to states for this effort.

SET-NET is a surveillance system created by the CDC to detect the effects of health threats to pregnant people and their babies from pregnancy through childhood for various infectious diseases, including COVID-19. Funding for this system is supported by the Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for the Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases (ELC) cooperative agreement. Missouri is one of approximately 23 states that participate in data collection. DHSS links various public health data sets including birth, death, fetal death certificates, Patient Abstract System (PAS), and EpiTrax to identify mothers who tested positive for COVID-19 while pregnant. Information such as health outcomes, birth defects, mortality, morbidity, and severity of COVID-19 and its symptoms is collected.

Data collected through this program was used by CDC for national reporting. Several academic journal articles published results from multiple states involved in the program, including Missouri.

The SET-NET program has successfully identified over 10,000 pregnancies where the mother tested positive for COVID-19 while pregnant during 2020 and 2021.

The "So What"

The SET-NET program has successfully identified over 10,000 pregnancies where the mother tested positive for COVID-19 while pregnant during 2020 and 2021.

Additionally, DHSS tracked different health outcomes relating to the mother and infant. There appeared to be no statistically significant differences between mothers who had tested positive for COVID-19 and those who did not have a positive test.

In late 2023, COVID-19 surveillance ended; however, CDC encouraged states to continue similar surveillance for congenital syphilis and hepatitis cases that are also captured by these surveillance systems. Missouri plans to apply for funding to complete this work in the next grant cycle.

The "Now What"

The SET-NET program was discontinued in 2023 with no option to continue with surveillance tracking using the CDC platform.

Continued funding would have allowed DHSS to conduct longitudinal studies. DHSS was in the process of obtaining access to medical record data that would have added to the overall information collected for each COVID-19 pregnancy.