

# Improving Mental Health of Pregnant and Postpartum People

An important part of solving the issue of  
Maternal Mortality in Georgia and the United States



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**Director, PEACE for Moms**

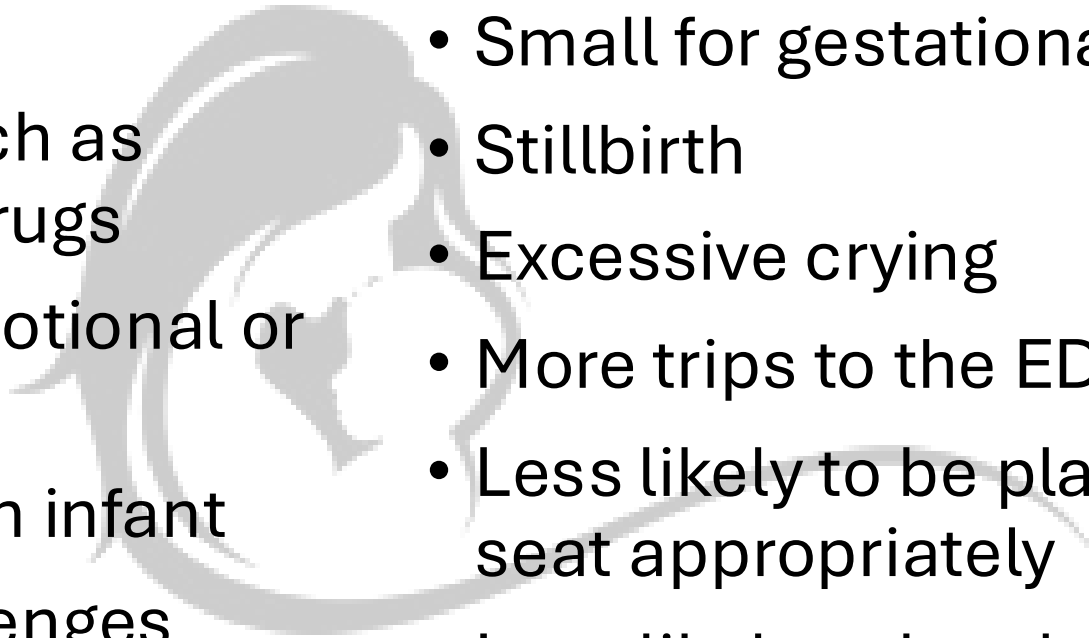
Director, Emory Women's Mental Health Program  
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Emory University School of Medicine

Mental health conditions are the **MOST COMMON** complication of pregnancy and childbirth, affecting 1 in 5 women and childbearing people.

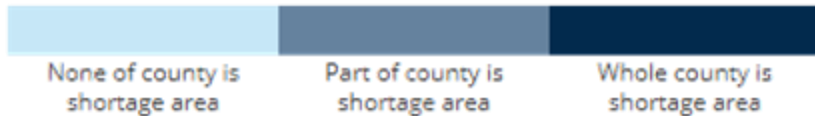
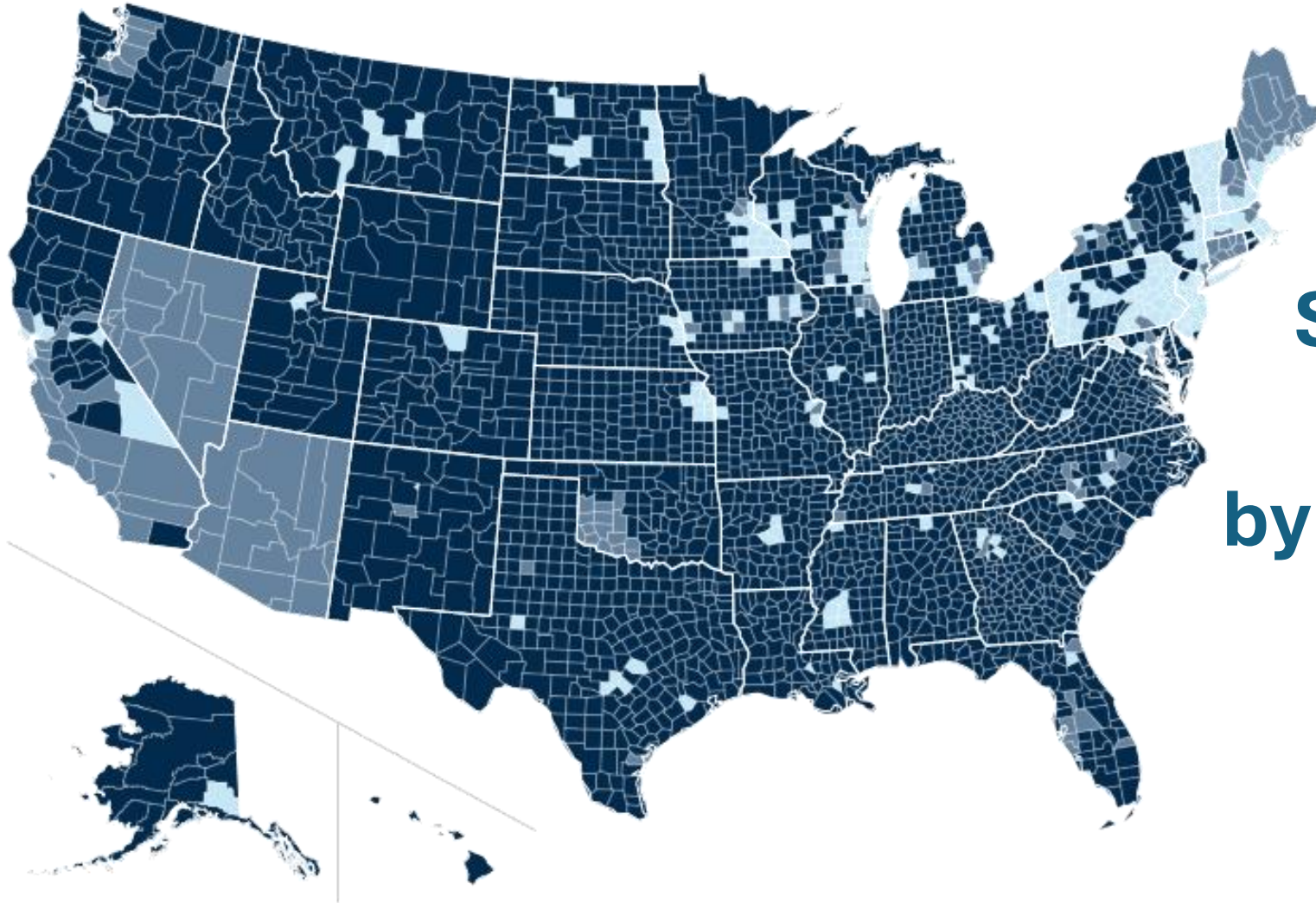


# Consequences of Maternal Mental Illnesses

- Poor prenatal care and postnatal care
- Use substances such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs
- Risk of physical, emotional or sexual abuse
- Less interaction with infant
- Breastfeeding challenges
- Financial toll
- Preterm delivery
- Small for gestational size
- Stillbirth
- Excessive crying
- More trips to the ED or doctor
- Less likely to be placed in car seat appropriately
- Less likely to be placed in safe sleep situation

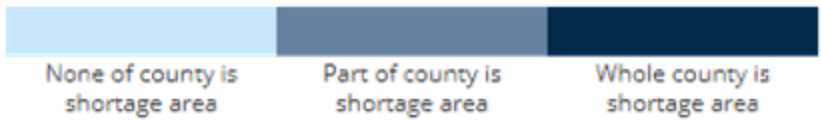
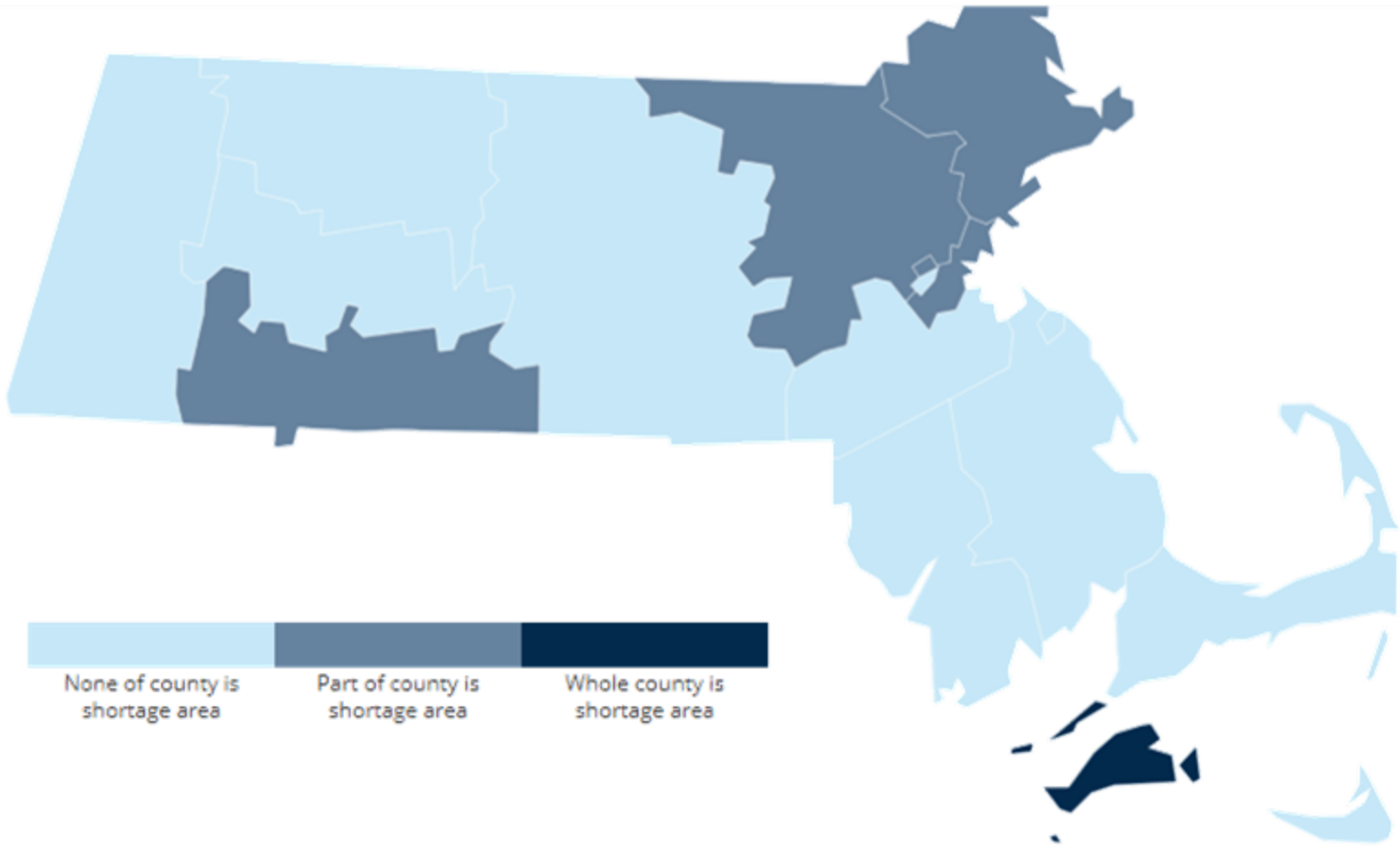


# Health Professional Shortage Areas: Mental Health, by county, July 2024

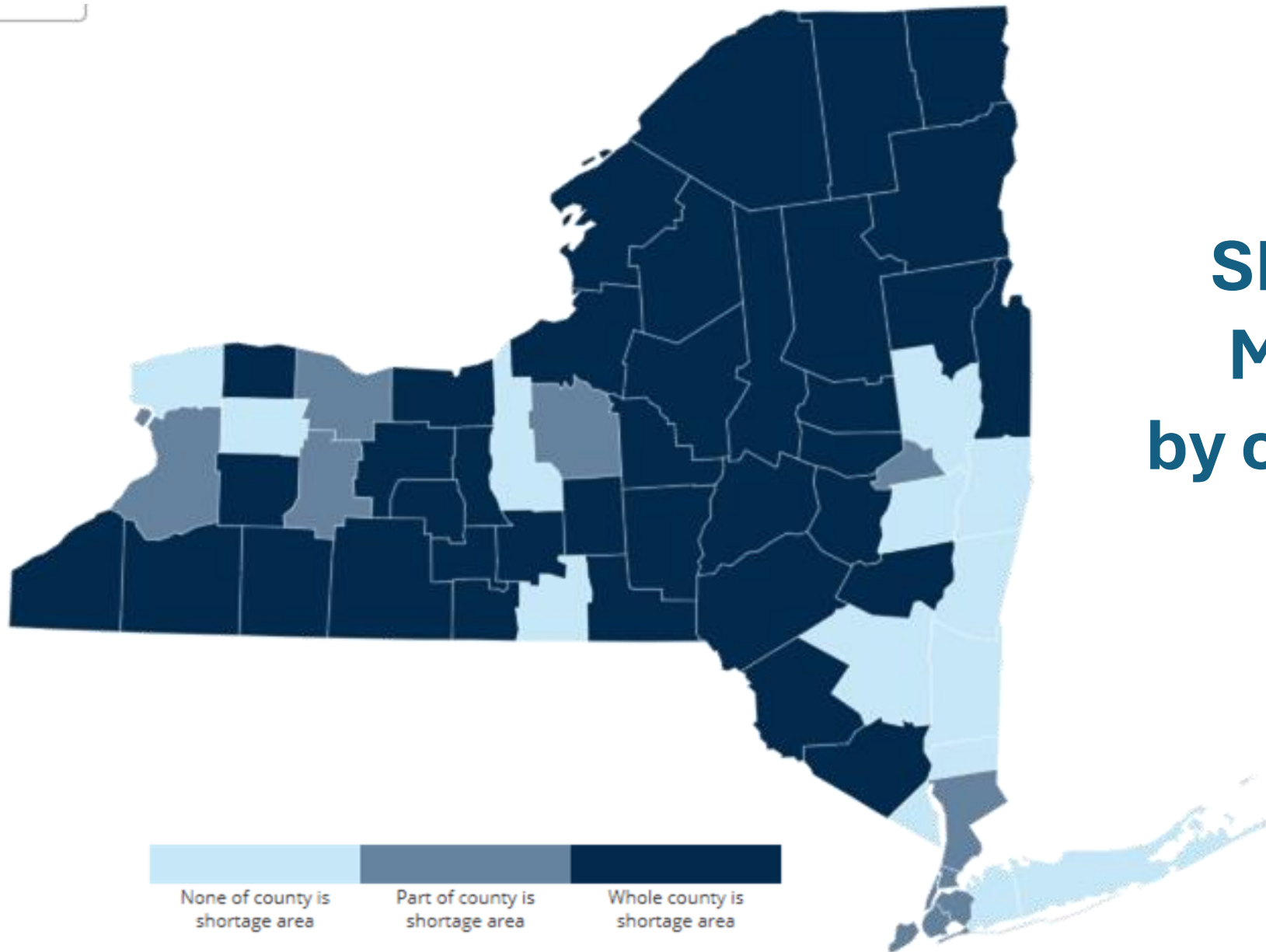


Data.HRSA.gov; ruralhealthinfo.org

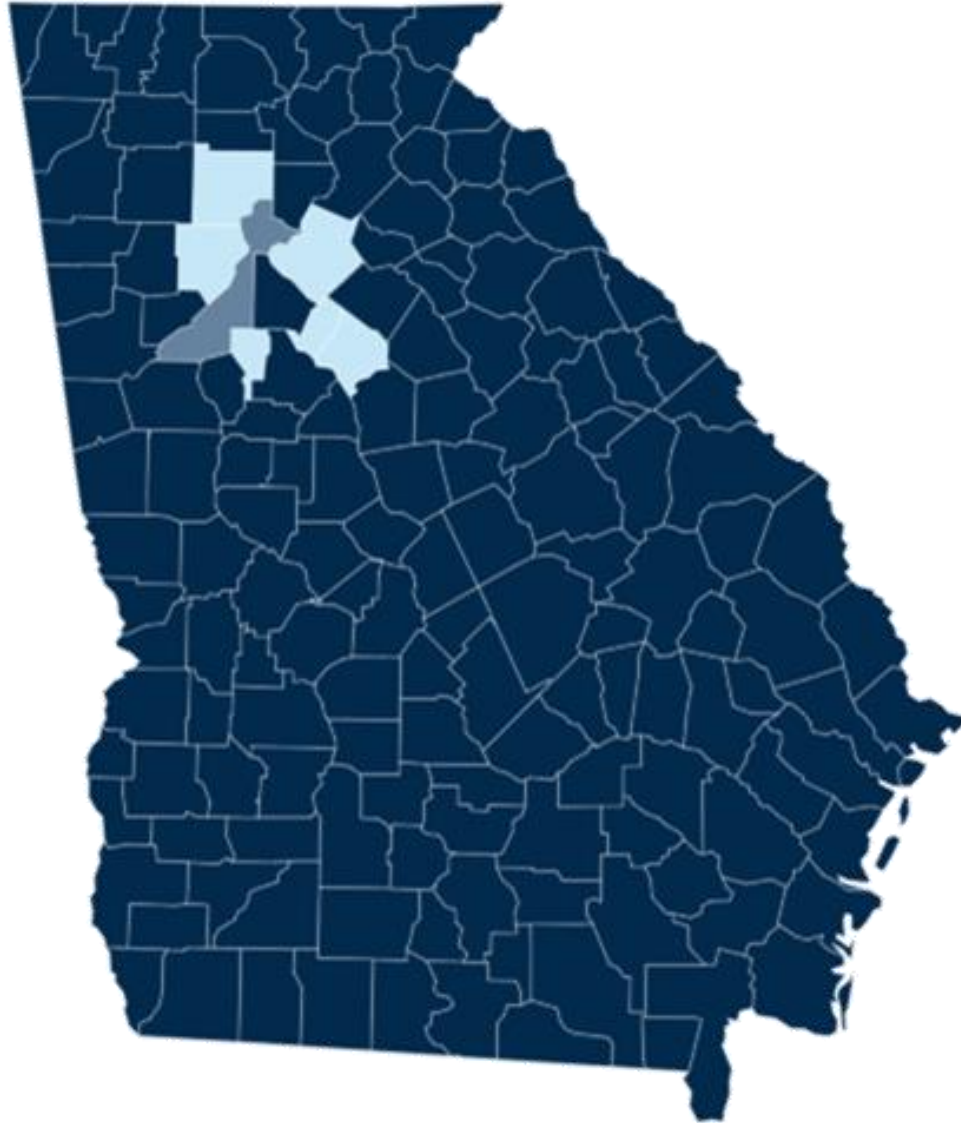
# Health Professional Shortage Areas: Mental Health, by county, July 2024



# Health Professional Shortage Areas: Mental Health, by county, July 2024



# Health Professional Shortage Areas: Mental Health, by county, July 2024



None of county is  
shortage area

Part of county is  
shortage area

Whole county is  
shortage area

	Square Mileage	Population	Births
New York	54,555	19.57 million	203,126
Georgia	59,425	11 million	125,046
Massachusetts	10,664	7 million	67,113



	Psychiatrists	Psychiatrists per capita	Births
New York	6918	2,844	203,126
Georgia	1248	8,744	125,046
Massachusetts	2,937	2,377	67,113



Suicide and overdose combined are the **LEADING CAUSE** of death for women in the first year following pregnancy.



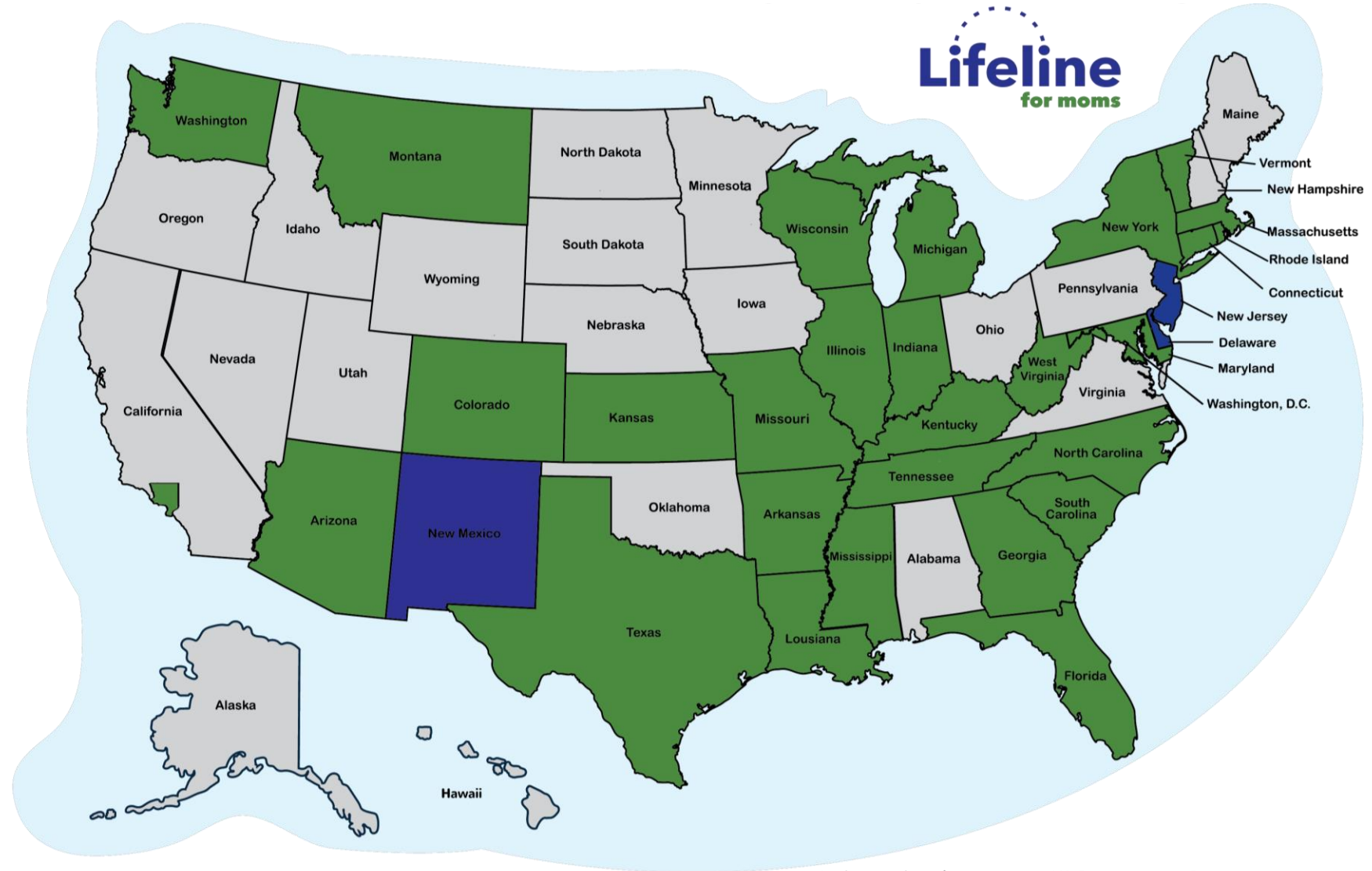
# Significant contribution to other Mortality Causes

Mental Health Conditions Between 2018-2020, mental health conditions, other than substance use disorder, at least probably **contributed to 20 (18%)** pregnancy-related deaths.

Substance Use Disorder Between 2018-2020, substance use disorder at least probably **contributed to 14 (13%)** pregnancy-related deaths.



# National Network of Perinatal Psychiatry Access Programs



Active Programs
  Aspiring Programs

Active national programs: (1) Postpartum Support International (PSI) Perinatal Psychiatric Consult Line & (2) Veterans Affairs (VA) Reproductive Mental Health Consultation Programs

As of October 2023



**ANOTHER *PEACE***  
**OF THE PUZZLE NEEDED**  
**TO IMPROVE**  
**MATERNAL**  
**MENTAL HEALTH**

# PEACE for MOMS

Perinatal  
Psychiatry  
(Consults)

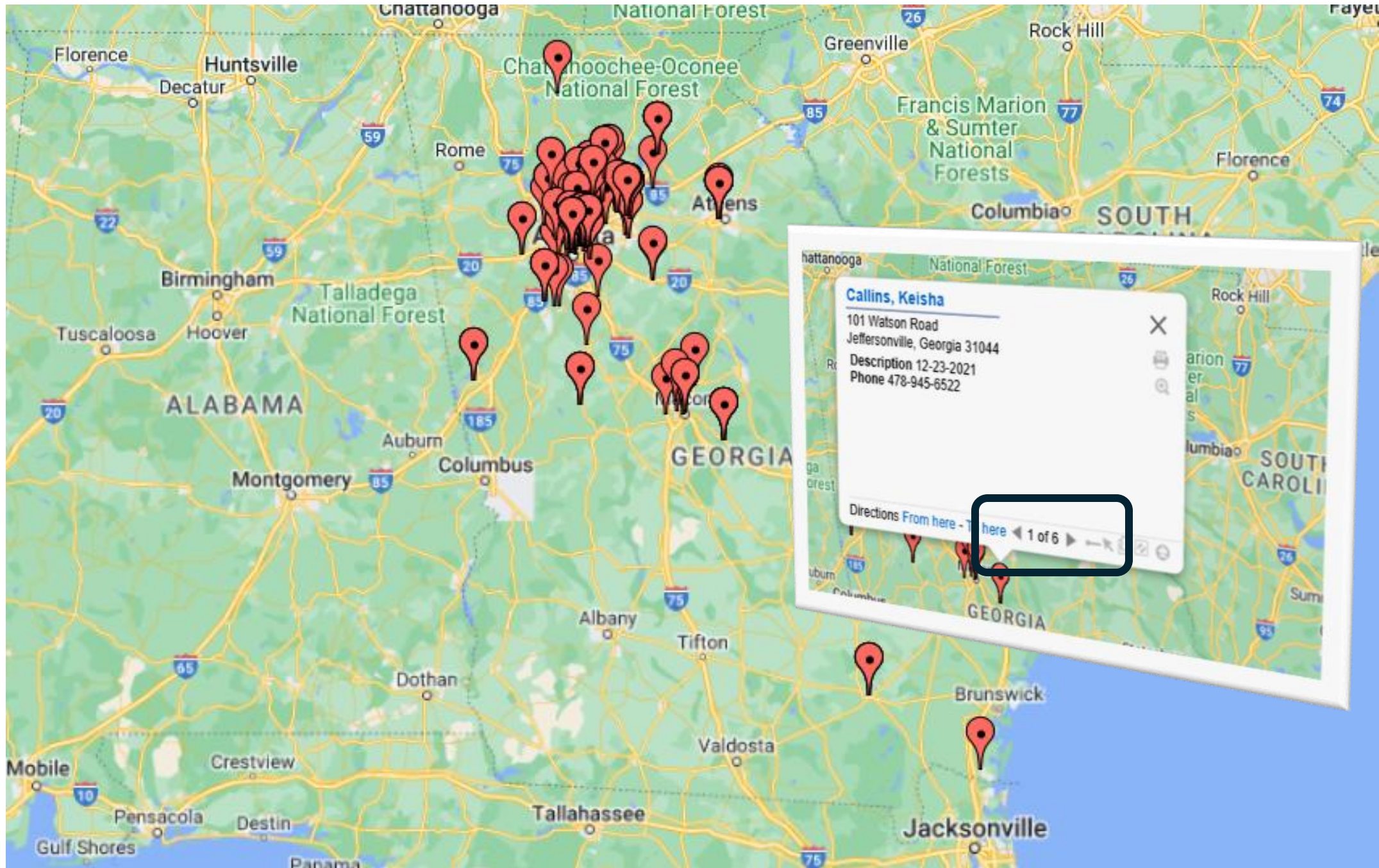
Education  
(Project ECHO)

Access  
(Resources and  
Website)

Community  
Engagement  
(Mothers and Babies)



[www.peace4momsga.org](http://www.peace4momsga.org) 470-97PEACE



**Callins, Keisha**

101 Watson Road  
Jeffersonville, Georgia 31044

Description 12-23-2021  
Phone 478-945-6522

Directions From here - To here 1 of 6

# Common Questions

My patient is taking medicine X. Is that okay?

My patient stopped their medication when they found out they were pregnant. Now they are feeling very depressed/anxious/mad. Help.

My patient miscarried twice before this pregnancy and now is really anxious. What should we do?

My patient miscarried twice before this pregnancy and now is really anxious. What should we do?

My patient scored 11 on the EPDS. What should I do

My patient is having thoughts about hurting the baby. Do I send them to the hospital?

My patient is preaching loudly in the parking lot. Help.

PEACE for Moms aims to promote maternal health, and build the capacity of Georgia's providers to address perinatal mental illness as front-liners



470-97-PEACE  
[peace4momsga.org](http://peace4momsga.org)



PERINATAL MENTAL  
HEALTH  
*FROM CRISIS TO ACTION*





# HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES COALITION OF GEORGIA

*Since 1974, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia (HMHBGA) has been the strongest statewide voice for improved access to healthcare and health outcomes for Georgia's mothers and babies.*



**ADVOCACY**



**EDUCATION**



**ACCESS TO  
RESOURCES**

# SOLUTIONS

## Coverage & Benefits

- Extended pregnancy Medicaid (12 months)
- Joint treatment reimbursements
- State funding for IECMH services

## Screening & Monitoring

- Standardized screening protocols
- HEDIS measure tracking
- Enhanced OB office screening capacity

## Workforce Development

- Network adequacy assessment
- Expanded peer support specialists
- Mental health specialist availability



# PROMISING APPROACHES

## Dyadic Treatment

Strengthening the Mother-Child Bond

- Focuses on enhancing caregiver-child interactions and emotional regulation.
- Programs like Child First, Parent-Child Interaction Therapy, and Child-Parent Psychotherapy show reduced PMADs and child behavioral issues.
- Outcomes include better attachment and social-emotional development for long-term child well-being.

## Home Visiting

Accessible, Community-Based Support

- Trained professionals conduct home visits to improve health outcomes and parenting.
- Evidence shows a 65% increase in mothers accepting mental health referrals.
- Benefits include reduced transportation barriers for underserved populations.





# HEALTHY MOTHERS, HEALTHY BABIES

*Coalition of Georgia*

## CONTACT US



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