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Governor Rick Snyder has listed as one of his “Dashboard Items” the reduction of infant mortality in Michigan as one of the measures of success for his administration. According to the Division for Vital Records and Health Statistics (VRHS) at the Michigan Department of Community Health, 881 infant deaths occurred for 117,309 births in 2009, which represents an infant mortality (IM) rate of 7.5. Wayne County experiences 250 of those 881 infant deaths for their 24,226 births, which represents an IM rate of 10.1. These numbers are part of an upward trend in IM from previous years in both Michigan and Wayne County, and are significantly above the national average of 6.3 for 2009.

Using data from the Wayne County Medical Examiner Office, as well as the VRHS and Michigan Child Death Review (CDR), this presentation will use time series analysis to illustrate the IM trend in Wayne County and Michigan since 2001, including changes in the various causes and manners of death for infants over this time. Additionally, this presentation illustrate how and where targeted public health initiatives may result in the biggest impact in reversing the IM trend in Michigan, thereby achieving Governor Rick Snyder’s goal.
Finally, a discussion will take place of what initiative are already occurring locally and state with, with the goal of reducing these numbers, and some of the significant challenges these initiatives face which contribute to the elusiveness of meeting these goals.