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The vast majority of New Zealand women will have a healthy and happy outcome from their pregnancy. Sadly, for small number, pregnancy will end with tragic consequences. The Perinatal and Maternal Mortality Review Committee (PMMRC) was established in 2006 with a view to reducing avoidable mortality. The PMMRC produces an annual report which provides data and analysis of mortality and selected morbidity, as well as an assessment of contributory factors and potentially avoidable perinatal and maternal deaths. The committee’s most recent data reports the lowest perinatal mortality rate since its establishment in 2006.

It is estimated that around 70% of New Zealand women will seek first trimester care from a general practice setting. General practice providers have an important role to play in early pregnancy care such as: recognition of those at greater risk of a poorer outcome, supporting timely engagement of women with maternity care providers, offering effective smoking cessation strategies, supporting improved uptake of peri-conceptual folic acid uptake and pre- pregnancy care for medical diseases such as diabetes.

This presentation provides an overview of the data from the committee’s most recent report, including the classifications of mortality, known risks and associated features and a recap of relevant recommendations – with a particular focus on those that are of significance for rural primary care providers.