

Dear [Obstetric Healthcare Provider/Practice],

As you know, Zika virus infection during pregnancy can cause microcephaly and other severe brain defects and has been linked to a number of other adverse pregnancy outcomes. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) US Zika Pregnancy Registry seeks to track all pregnancies with laboratory evidence of possible Zika virus infection, whether or not the mother has symptoms.

The goals of the US Zika Pregnancy Registry are to obtain the information CDC needs to estimate the risk of congenital infection among fetuses and infants of pregnant women with possible Zika infection and to identify factors that may influence pregnancy outcomes. This information will be used to update clinical guidance, plan for services for pregnant women and families affected by Zika virus, and improve prevention of Zika virus infection during pregnancy.

Healthcare Providers' Roles

You can help. As your [state, tribal, local, or territorial health department], we may contact your practice to request prenatal and delivery information on a pregnant woman with possible Zika virus infection. We may also contact you to request this information if a neonate is later identified to have possible congenital Zika virus infection. The information we gather and send to CDC represents the minimum necessary to carry out the public health purposes of the US Zika Pregnancy Registry.

Patient Confidentiality

As a healthcare provider, you are considered a covered entity under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Under the HIPAA Privacy Rule (45 CFR § 164.501), you may disclose, without prior authorization, protected health information to public health authorities, such as CDC, which are authorized by section 301 of the Public Health Service Act to collect or receive identifiable information for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease. However, per federal standards established in the HIPAA Privacy Rule, people have the right to receive an accounting of disclosures of their protected health information made by a covered entity.

CDC has developed fact sheets that you may wish to give to your patients to let them know how their information is being used: <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/hc-providers/registry.html>. These fact sheets also contain information on the Assurance of Confidentiality that CDC has obtained. This Assurance is a formal confidentiality protection authorized under Section 308(d) of the Public Service Act that stipulates that CDC cannot be compelled to release protected health information for any reason without authorization from you and your patient. Because of this Assurance, information collected for the US Zika Pregnancy Registry may only be used to better understand Zika virus infection during pregnancy and its outcomes.

Resources

We appreciate your time and attention to this important public health issue. For up-to-date tools and resources, please visit the US Zika Pregnancy Registry Healthcare Provider website, <https://www.cdc.gov/zika/reporting/registry.html>. This website includes patient checklists, trainings for healthcare providers, clinical guidance, print-ready counseling resources, and other helpful tips.

[Insert appropriate jurisdiction signature]