



Passport and March of Dimes

Two Missions, One Goal: Healthier Kentucky Moms, Babies, and Children



When Holli Newton first started working at Passport Health Plan (Passport) several months ago, none of us knew that her now 13-month old son Ryder was born severely premature with major complications, or that March of Dimes had provided major support during her difficult birth. None of us knew that her son was (and

still is) one of our very own — a Passport member — or that in her time of need one of our Rapid Response customer service reps went above and beyond to help her obtain an urgent authorization. When we learned her story, our staff were amazed, humbled, and reinvigorated by how a seemingly small task on our end could make a world of difference to a young family. We were touched by this real life example of how our efforts directly support our friends at the March of Dimes.



Why it matters

Last year, every 1 in 8 Passport babies** were born prematurely — higher than the national average of 1 in 9*. Kentucky's overall C-section rate (34.6%) is higher than the national cesarean rate (31.8%). The impact on Kentucky's citizens is far-reaching. Premature births often lead to long-term health complications and disabilities, development delays, cerebral palsy, blindness, intellectual disabilities, and emotional impacts; and infants delivered early may develop serious lung problems, delays in academic achievement, and other problems not apparent at birth. Longer hospital stays result in increasing costs to taxpayers, health plans, and employers.

So what are we doing about it?

The good news is, these tragic circumstances may be circumnavigated and perhaps someday eliminated through the important research at March of Dimes and the dedicated efforts of providers and health plans like Passport.

At Passport, we've made it a priority this year to focus on reducing C-sections, improving birth outcomes, and preventing pre-term births. We've expanded the scope of our Mommy Steps (for high risk pregnancies) and Tiny Tots (for detained babies) programs to include face-to-face interactions at several Kentucky hospitals. We have also begun implementing new innovative initiatives such as:

- **Home care for high risk pregnant members**

For certain high risk members, we will offer regular assessments and individualized education by high-risk OB nurses, clinical OB pharmacists, 24/7 nurse availability, and home-based care — all focusing on 17P administration and care management of nausea, vomiting, blood clotting disorders, hypertensive disorders, and diabetes in pregnancy.

- **Outreach to physicians with high rates of scheduled C-sections**

After 16 years of working closely with many Kentucky providers, we've learned that an honest conversation can greatly impact behavior. This year we will work more closely with our provider partners and consider requiring authorizations for all scheduled inductions and C-sections.

These initiatives are only the beginning for Passport. As we continue to join hands with members, providers and advocates across Kentucky, more opportunities and new ideas will evolve. We're thrilled to be a part of it all, and proudly support the March of Dimes for their ongoing commitment to healthy babies and healthy families.

Sincerely,



Mark B. Carter
Chief Executive Officer, Passport



Source:

*March of Dimes Premature birth: The financial impact on business 12/13

**Passport data