

Minneapolis- The Preeclampsia Foundation today announced its role as an outreach partner in an unprecedented public-private partnership to address the rising U.S. infant mortality rate. Pregnant women and new mothers will be able to get health information delivered regularly to their mobile phones by text message at no charge under an innovative public service program launched today by a coalition of mobile phone service providers, health professionals, and federal, state, and local agencies, including the Preeclampsia Foundation.

The new program, called text4baby, is a free mobile information service that provides timely health information to women from early pregnancy through their babies' first year. The service sends important health tips that are timed to the mother's stage of pregnancy or the baby's age

Women who sign up for the service by texting BABY to 511411 (or BEBE for Spanish) receive three free SMS text messages each week timed to their due date or baby's date of birth. These messages focus on a variety of topics critical to maternal and child health, including messages that focus on the warning signs of preeclampsia, a dangerous disorder of pregnancy that, undetected, can lead to organ failure and even death. Text4baby messages also connect women to prenatal and infant care services and other resources.

"Although the Preeclampsia Foundation's website is the leading information provider about the warning signs of preeclampsia, since 90% of Americans have mobile phones, text4baby helps us get a few basic messages out to a larger group of pregnant women," said Eleni Tsigas, executive director of the Preeclampsia Foundation. Research likewise shows that texting is most prevalent among women of childbearing age. "This program aligns with our objectives to reach more women, especially underserved populations, with lifesaving information," said Tsigas.

Each year in the U.S., more than 500,000 babies are born prematurely and an estimated 28,000 children die before their first birthday signifying a public health crisis. The infant mortality rate in the U.S. is one of the highest in the industrialized world, and for the first time since the 1950s, that rate is on the rise.

"We believe the power of partnership and community can make an incredible difference in women's and children's lives," said Judy Meehan, executive director of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition, the program's coordinator. "Text4baby brings HMHB's

mission to life and with the help of our partners, we believe we can be a strong catalyst for change."

About text4baby Partnership: An educational program of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition (HMHB), text4baby delivers timely health tips via text message to those who need it most. Text4baby is made possible through a broad, public-private partnership that includes government, corporations, academic institutions, professional associations, tribal agencies and non-profit organizations. Founding partners include HMHB, Voxiva, CTIA - The Wireless Foundation and Grey Healthcare Group (a WPP company). Johnson & Johnson is the founding sponsor, and premier sponsors include WellPoint, Pfizer and CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield. U.S. government partners include the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Defense Military Health System. The mobile health platform is provided by Voxiva and free messaging services are generously provided by participating wireless service providers. Implementation partners include BabyCenter, Danya International, Syniverse Technologies, Keynote Systems and The George Washington University. MTV Networks is a media sponsor.