Tennessee’s Regional Perinatal Centers

Protecting the Most Vulnerable

Five Regional Perinatal Centers are affiliated with five major teaching hospitals – the Regional Medical Center at Memphis, Vanderbilt University Medical Center (Nashville), UT Medical Center (Knoxville), Erlanger Medical Center (Chattanooga), and Johnson City Medical Center.

Every center provides an entire region with high-risk obstetrical and neonatal specialty care from physicians and other professionals on-site 24/7 and serves as the high-risk obstetrics referral center. In 2010, they admitted 4,732 babies into their NICU units – 2,395 of them weighed 2,500 grams or less and 782 weighed 1,500 grams or less.

Tennessee has historically provided $2.25 million in state grant funding to assist our five Regional Perinatal Centers. It is matched dollar for dollar by federal Medicaid funding for a total of $4.5 million.

State and matching federal funding provides:

- **specialized services for every county in the state** - The Med in Memphis provides services to all of West Tennessee; Vanderbilt to all of Middle Tennessee, UT Medical Center to 19 counties around Knoxville, Johnson City to 8 counties in Upper East Tennessee, and Erlanger to 12 counties in Southeast Tennessee;

- **education and training for professionals across the state**, which results in a uniform and highly efficient standard of care, enabling the earlier identification of high risk pregnancies and intensive intervention and support for mothers and high risk infants;

- **professional training totaling 4,978.3 hours statewide in 2010** - 1,660 hours related to the care of high risk infants and 3,318.3 hours related to obstetrical care. Training must occur on an ongoing basis due to the number of people who need it, turnover in the field, updated certification standards, and continuing improvements in the standard of medical care;

- **transportation for sick infants (1520 infant transports in 2010)**, many born at other hospitals but some who must return to the NICU;

- **follow up care and evaluation for high risk infants throughout the first year of life** (648 telephone consultations and 2,934 on-site consultations in 2010).

Continued state funding for Tennessee’s Regional Perinatal Centers is critical to maintain the life-saving services provided for high-risk mothers and babies across the state.