**CONSUMER OPINIONS ON PREGNANCY AND DELIVERY METHODS: BASELINE SURVEY RESULTS FROM THE FLORIDA THINK 39 WEEKS AWARENESS AND EDUCATION CAMPAIGN**

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**PUBLIC HEALTH AREA:**

FOCUS: Adverse perinatal outcomes

POPULATION: Women

**ISSUE:** Scheduled deliveries in the Florida have contributed to the rise in late preterm births. Despite the risks, many consumers seek elective deliveries because of misperceptions about what constitutes a term delivery and the perceived safety of delivering a few weeks early.

**SETTING:** Seven counties in Florida targeting women of childbearing age.

**PROJECT:** A baseline survey was conducted to measure the impact of a new consumer education campaign on the importance of the last weeks of pregnancy.

**RESULTS:** Despite wide-spread recognition that a baby reaches full-term at 39-40 weeks of gestation, nearly half of Florida consumers responding to the survey indicated delivery before this time is safe. Nearly half of the survey respondents who had a baby in the last 18 months reported being offered the option of scheduling an induction or C-section by their health care.

**BARRIERS:** Two challenges were encountered with survey implementation: the time required for development of the instrument as a result of interest by the funding organization in using it in other parts of the country; and the varied capacity of local coalitions to collect the survey data in a timely manner.

**LESSONS LEARNED**: Women who completed the survey in the seven targeted counties had some level of knowledge about the need to deliver after 36 weeks of gestation. However, there is room for improvement in that knowledge base about the importance of extending the pregnancy through 39 weeks. There are also differences in knowledge, attitudes and perceptions based on whether the woman was pregnant or a mother of young children and by whether the woman had private health insurance. Understanding the level of knowledge and these differences by subgroups can help guide educational messages in the most effective manner.