

# KRISTIN ASHFORD, PHD, WHNP-BC, FAAN

Professor  
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Faculty  
and Interprofessional Education Affairs  
College of Nursing  
University of Kentucky



## PILOT PROJECT #3

# Perinatal Cannabis: Perceptions, Use Patterns, and Policy Implications

The Perinatal Research and Wellness Team will examine perinatal cannabis use patterns (dose, frequency, and route of administration) and dependency in Kentucky by analyzing UKHC de-identified patient data over a 5-year period. We will also enroll patients at UKHC clinics and invite them to complete an online survey and participate in a virtual focus group to explore perceptions, motivations, and hesitations for perinatal cannabis use in Kentucky.

## Cannabis Use & Infant Outcomes: What We Know

### Cannabis use and cannabis use disorder during pregnancy increase risk of:

- likelihood of low birth weight (Gabrhelik et al., 2021)
- infant being small for gestational age (Bandoli et al., 2021)
- intrauterine growth restriction (Benevenuto et al., 2017)
- gastrointestinal malformation (Bandoli et al., 2021)
- preterm birth (Bandoli et al., 2021)

# KRISTIN ASHFORD, PHD, WHNP-BC, FAAN

Professor  
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Faculty  
and Interprofessional Education Affairs  
College of Nursing  
University of Kentucky

---

**PILOT PROJECT #3**

## STUDY AIMS & PROGRESS

1

**Describe perinatal cannabis use patterns (dose, frequency, and route of administration) and dependency in Kentucky**

**Analyze data from a 5-year Retrospective chart review of de-identified perinatal patient UKHC data**

- **Our research team is working with the UK Center for Clinical and Translational Sciences to obtain data from patients seen at UKHC facilities. The data query will include demographics and variables on drug use, prenatal statistics, and birth outcomes.**
- **We have prepared a codebook template for the anticipated dataset to guide data cleaning, visualization, and analysis, as well as future data sharing.**

# KRISTIN ASHFORD, PHD, WHNP-BC, FAAN

Professor  
Associate Dean for Undergraduate Faculty  
and Interprofessional Education Affairs  
College of Nursing  
University of Kentucky

---

**PILOT PROJECT #3**

## STUDY AIMS & PROGRESS

**2**

### **Identify perceptions, motivations, and hesitations for perinatal cannabis use in Kentucky**

- **Study details: Recruit patients at UKHC OB-GYN clinics to participate in the study. Inclusion criteria: currently pregnant, self-reported cannabis use at any point during the current pregnancy, between 18-45 years old, able to read and understand English.**
- **Data collection launched in late July 2023**
- **7 participants have been enrolled thus far**
- **We will randomly select eligible participants from the study and invite them to take part in a focus group discussion to further explore perinatal cannabis use**