Prevention & Strategies:
Addressing Pregnancy-Related Morbidity

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AAAS SciLine Media: Pregnancy-related death in the United States
December 5th, 2022
Maternal Health Defined

**Maternal Morbidity:** Any health condition attributed to and/or aggravated by pregnancy and childbirth that has negative outcomes to the birther's well-being

**Maternal Mortality:** The death of a woman during pregnancy, at delivery, or soon after delivery

Sources: [WHO](https://www.who.int), [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov)
Of the nearly 1,000 pregnancy-related deaths in the U.S. between 2017 and 2019, more than 80% of them were preventable.

Source: CDC Maternal Mortality Review Committees (MMRCs)
What Contributes to Maternal Mortality and Morbidity?

- Access to care
- Quality of care by geographical location
- Prevalence of chronic diseases
- Clinical support
- **Structural racism**

**Structural racism**: a system where public policies, institutional practices and cultural representations work to reinforce and perpetuate racial inequity.  
*Source: Aspen Institute*

Throughout U.S. history, women of color have suffered *reproductive injustices*.  
*Source: NIH, Reproductive Health Journal*

Black women are 3X more likely to die from a pregnancy than any other racial or ethnic group.
Present Day Example of Structural Racism

Bedridden for six weeks of motherhood
Four surgeries, including a C-section

"Being heard and appropriately treated was the difference between life or death for me." - Serena Williams
What the Data Says
Prevention Strategies

Strategies to Prevent Pregnancy-Related Mortality & Morbidity

Knowledge:
- Identify the disparities in pregnancy-mortality rates
- Community:
  - Partner with community organizations at the local, state & national levels

Action:
- Improve access to doula & quality care during pregnancy
- Enhance pregnancy-related morbidity data collection
- Improve maternal & community nutrition

Sources: CDC Maternal Mortality Review, CDC Pregnancy Mortality Surveillance Program
Doulas

Who

Individuals, often from local communities, who are trained to provide psychosocial, emotional, and educational support during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period.

What

They are critical in labor and delivery, serving as patient advocates, and providing comfort and coaching. Community-based doula programs build on the strong relationship doulas establish.

Doula-assisted mothers are:

- 2X less likely to experience a birth complication
- 4X less likely to have a low birthweight baby
- More likely to breastfeed

Source: DONA International
Center for Black Maternal Health & Reproductive Justice (CBMHRJ)
Our Blueprint to Combatting Black Maternal Mortality

Mission
Foster academic and community-engaged research in support of the center’s goals to conduct maternal health research with a focus on Black maternal health and eliminating inequities.

Center Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOTHER Lab</th>
<th>Research Development &amp; Grants</th>
<th>Maternal Health Epidemiology &amp; Data Synthesis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maternal &amp; Child Health Policy</td>
<td>Education &amp; Training</td>
<td>Community Engagement</td>
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MOTHER Lab
Maternal Outcomes of Translational Health Equity Research Lab

Research lab comprised of 35 students from undergrad to postdoc with a keen interested in reducing maternal health disparities as experienced by Black women.

3 Maternal Health Projects Underway
## Initiative
Reducing Racial Disparities in SMM post COVID19

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<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Aim</th>
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| Assessing the integration of maternal safety bundles and **community-based doulas** to improve outcomes for Black women. | Reduce racial disparities in severe maternal morbidity post COVID19
Learn about how doula care affects pregnancy-related outcomes of Black women. **Ultimate goal:** Provide the foundation to create future interventions. |
### Two Examples of Prevention Strategies in the United States

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<th>Initiative</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
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<tr>
<td>Maternal &amp; Infant Community Health Collaboratives (MICHC)</td>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>The state of NY has 22 collaborative, community-based projects working to improve maternal and infant health outcomes for high-need, low income women and their families.</td>
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<td>N.J. Department of Health’s Healthy Women Healthy Families</td>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>NJ Service hubs dedicated to providing access to community health workers (doulas included) and essential services that help families, and care for children, primarily from pregnancy to age five.</td>
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6th Annual Black Maternal Health Conference

Friday, April 7, 2023

“The Role of Nurses and Professional Midwives in Addressing Maternal Health Inequities”
References

References Cont'd

• "MOTHER Lab X Tufts University School of Medicine." https://motherlab.org/
Contact Information

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