GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Health Care Finance

Maternal Health Advisory Group

Virtual Meeting via WebEx
Tuesday, October 21st, 2025
Meeting Summary

TMaH & Patient Safety in Managing High-Risk Pregnancies *See slides 5-7*	• Recent data comparing key maternal and infant health indicators for Medicaid beneficiaries in the District versus national averages highlight opportunities for improving maternal health outcomes. • TMaH aims to enhance patient safety to better manage high-risk pregnancies and improve outcomes by implementing evidence-based safety practices.
Community of Hope: Utilizing Care Coordination to Optimize Patient Safety *See slides 9-26*	• Community of Hope (COH) shared their approach to whole-person maternity care which includes connecting families to resources such as WIC, integrated emotional wellness, and group care services (e.g., Centering Pregnancy). • Patients are screened for medical and social risk factors, assigned to care tiers based on the number and severity of those risk factors, and then connected to a care coordinator who provides consistent support. • Through their care coordination efforts, COH has seen positive results in health outcomes and patient satisfaction. • Care coordinators and navigators receive consistent oversight and professional development in areas such as motivational interviewing, interpersonal violence, and safety planning. • ***Rides for Moms*:** COH offers transportation to perinatal appointments, as well as to the hospital, NICU and maternal-fetal medicine appointments. • **Case Conferencing:** The Perinatal Services Director and the Integrated Emotional wellness clinical meet on a bi-weekly basis to review cases and develop coordinated plans of action to support high-risk patients.
MedStar Family Choice: Growing Together Pregnancy Program	• MedStar Family Choice's Growing Together Pregnancy Program supports high-risk pregnant individuals by offering a variety of services tailored to their complex needs, including ongoing support from a case manager, chronic disease management, and behavioral health support. • Individuals are identified for this program early through a variety of ways, including HIE data, referrals from case managers, social workers, and others.

See slides 27-46	• MedStar offers three additional programs to help meet the needs of enrollees with behavioral health concerns:
	  ○ **Mood Disorders Program:** To help manage individuals who have a complicated medication regiment.
	  ○ **Women's Mental Health Program:** To provide mental health care for different conditions.
	  ○ **Life Enhancement Services:** To support wrap-around care for pregnant persons with behavioral health or SUD concerns.
	
	• MedStar also offers patient education and community engagement:
	  ○ **Maternity Mondays:** Weekly virtual or in-person educational sessions on topics such as safe sleep, self-care, and WIC enrollment.
	  ○ **MedStar's Enrollee Community Wellness Center:** Located in Ward 7, this center serves as a space where individuals can meet with case managers in person as well as attend baby showers and hands-on educational training hosted by the Growing Together program.

Breakout Groups *See slide 48*	**Group #1: Public Education & Awareness Campaign Activity** • Participants identified barriers and key themes/messages for a potential public awareness campaign for pregnant beneficiaries to increase early engagement in prenatal care. • See below for the results of our collaborative brainstorming session. **Group #2: Case Management and Care Coordination for High-Risk Pregnancies** • Common risk conditions seen among pregnant patients includes preeclampsia, obesity, gestational diabetes, housing insecurity, and behavioral health needs. One group noted that young adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities have unique considerations. • Participants identified existing efforts within their organizations to support high-risk pregnancies, including nurse-led case management, patient education, providing blood pressure monitoring tools, and care coordination with community nurses, social workers and patient navigators.
Next Steps *See slide 49*	• The Perinatal Quality Collaborative (PQC) is launching the Perinatal Mental Health Bundle in January. Interested participants should contact Stephanie Ayala at sayala@dcha.org • Community of Hope is conducting focus groups with prenatal/postpartum Medicaid beneficiaries; please share flyers with interested individuals. • Next meeting is on **November 18th from 11am-12:15pm** ○ Topic: Doulas & Perinatal Community Health Workers in Patient Safety • Contact dhcf.maternalhealth@dc.gov with questions; meeting materials are posted on https://dhcf.dc.gov/page/transforming-maternal-health

Campaign Goal:

Encourage both providers and beneficiaries to enage in prenatal care during the first trimester of pregnancy

Background:

Early prenatal care is a key opportunity to screen for risk factors, connect individuals to services that address health-related social needs, and coordinate care for existing health conditions throughout pregnancy. DC Health data indicates that approximately one-third of mothers in the District did not have early prenatal care. Those that did not engage in early prenatal care had a significantly higher rate of preterm births (29.5%) than mothers who began prenatal care during their first trimester (9.5%). We believe this issue is more acute among the Medicaid population.

Audience:

- Pregnant beneficiaries (or eligible for Medicaid)

Barriers:

- when beneficiaries have had multiple kids - been there, done that mindset
- job and income-- worries about discrimination/unfair treatment from boss because of needing time off, might not have enough paid sick days
- lack of trust and avoiding healthcare system
- Inactive insurance
- using transportation has long wait times - Uber is better
- health literacy
- community
- Past trauma from previous pregnancies
- Don't know about all the resources avail. (Ex: FQHCs don't require insurance)
- couldn't get insurance
- obese women - not discovering they are pregnant
- eligibility changes
- not understanding that first 8 weeks are critical
- fear of judgement when engaging healthcare
- not sure if they were keeping the baby
- indecisiveness around continuing pregnancy
- not connected to PCP
- unsuccessful termination
- lack fo interconception care
- chronically stressed communities

Themes/Messaging:

- Eligibility requirements and opportunities for coverage
- job protection (leave as accommodati) & DC Paid Family Leave- job protectad & can receive income replacement for time off from work for prenatal appts
- give your baby the best chance
- Importance of interconception care
- importance of early prenatal care
- prepare your body before you even get pregnant
- you have a direct responsibility for that baby's health
- awareness of DC labor laws
- awareness of paid family leave
- awareness of transportation resources - MCOs offer this

Channels:

- grocery stores
- laundromats, salons, rec centers - places where people go
- bus routes, metros
- churches, places of worship

Audience:

- Perinatal providers and admin staff

Barriers:

Themes/Messaging: