



Friends,

As we continue to celebrate Mother's Day this month we extend our deepest gratitude to all mothers, caregivers, and nurturers who pour love into their families each day. During this special month, we also reflect on the critical importance of maternal health, particularly for Black mothers who face disproportionate challenges and disparities. When we launched the Black Maternal Health Caucus, we wanted to advance policy solutions that address our maternal health crisis and save moms lives. As we continue to push the Momnibus bills into laws, we want to honor the mothers who have faced disparities in birth. As we cherish and uplift the mothers in our lives, let us also recommit to the ongoing work of advancing policies that prioritize maternal health and address systemic inequities.

Happy Mother's Day to all the incredible mothers who inspire us with their love, courage, and unwavering commitment to their families. Your impact is immeasurable, and we celebrate you today and every day.

Sincerely,

Co-Chairs Alma Adams and Lauren Underwood

Federal Funding Opportunities

Minority Research Grant Program 2024

This funding is available to minority serving institutions to support research focused on health equity and the reduction of health disparities.

Who can Apply: 1) Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), 2) Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), 3) Asian American and Native American and Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs), 4) Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), 5) Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions (ANNHs), 6) Native American-Serving Non-Tribal Institutions (NASNTIs), or 7) Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs).

Deadline to Apply: 06/03/2024

Learn more [here](#).

FY2025 Hospital Inpatient Prospective Payment System (IPPS) and Long-Term Care Hospital Prospective Payment System (LTCH PPS) Proposed Rule

There is an opportunity for public comment on two maternal health matters within the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) proposed rule focused on Medicare hospital inpatient prospective systems (IPPS) and long-term hospital prospective payment system (LTCHs) related policy changes. By providing public comment, you are able to express support or dissent and generally influence regulatory action. In the case of this proposed rule, the first opportunity for public comment is in [section N](#) on the differences between hospital resources required to provide inpatient pregnancy and childbirth services, meaning hospital based overnight care, to Medicare patients as compared to non-Medicare patients. While many associate Medicare with adults 65 and above, any person of any age who has a permanent disability or end-stage renal disease is eligible for Medicare coverage, including for pregnancies. Questions to guide your public comment on this matter are [here](#). Secondly, in [section O](#), CMS requested public comment on potential solutions that can be implemented through regulatory standards, known as conditions of participation (CoPs), for hospitals to address maternal morbidity, mortality, disparities, and maternity care access in the United States. Currently, there are no baseline care requirements for hospitals, critical access hospitals (CAHs) and rural emergency hospitals (REH) that are specific to maternal-child services. Questions to guide your public comment on this matter are [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

Eligible to Comment: Anyone!

Logistical Information: You are able to submit comment as an individual, organization, or anonymous commentator.

Deadline to comment: 06/10/2024

Learn more [here](#).

Center for Maternal and Child Health Medicaid Partnerships

This funding is available to public or private organizations and Tribal governments to build knowledge and shared priorities between state Medicaid, CHIP, and Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant programs (Title V) and provide one-to-one, state-specific tailored assistance directly to state Medicaid, CHIP, and Title V programs to support maternal and child health populations.

Who can Apply: Public or private organizations, inclusive of Tribal led organizations, or Tribal governments

Deadline to Apply: 7/10/2024

Learn more [here](#).

Maternity and Child Health Policy Innovation Program

This funding is available to public or private organizations and Tribal governments to provide technical assistance (TA) to intergovernmental stakeholders, including governors' offices, state legislatures, state and local health officials, and other state and local officials to help them develop and implement policy initiatives that improve outcomes and reduce related health disparities. Technical assistance can take the form of (1) convening learning communities (LCs) that engage diverse stakeholders and (2) developing and disseminating informational resources such as (but not limited to) policy briefs, webinars, and/or legislation trackers.

Who can Apply: Public or private organizations, inclusive of Tribal led organizations, or Tribal governments

Deadline to Apply: 09/01/2024

Learn more [here](#).

If you're applying for one of the funding opportunities above, don't forget to reach out to your Representative and Senators to see if they can provide a letter of support to bolster your application! To find your Members of Congress, visit <https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member>.

General Resources

The **National Maternal Mental Health Hotline** is free, confidential, and here to help, 24/7, all expecting and new mothers. Call or text at 1-833-TLC-MAMA (or 1-833-853-6262). To learn more about the hotline or access shareable materials, please visit [here](#).

The **Office on Women's Health** offers [resources](#) for finding support for postpartum depression.

The **CDC Hear Her campaign** has [resources](#) for raising awareness of urgent maternal warning signs during and after pregnancy.

Featured News

Senate Committee Hearing on the Maternal Health Crisis

On May 2nd, the US Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) held a hearing on the topic "What Can Congress Do to Address the Severe Shortage of Minority Health Care Professionals and the Maternal Health Crisis?". The hearing featured testimony from Senator Laphonza Bulter (CA) and Representative Michael Burgess (TX-26), as well as Yolanda Lawson, MD, Samuel Cook, MD, Michael Galvez, MD, Jaines Andrades, DNP, AGACNP-BC, and Brian Stone, MD, FACS.

During the hearing, the panels emphasized the need for increasing the number of

minority health care professionals as well as addressing the staggering maternal mortality numbers in the US. During his statement, when talking about the maternal health crisis, Co-chair Bernie Sanders (VT) asked "What are we going to do about it?", stating, "We need to pass the Black Maternal Helth Momnibus Act".

Not sure if your Representatives support Momnibus legislation? A list of Momnibus cosponsors in the House can be found [here](#) and a list of cosponsors in the Senate can be found [here](#).

Watch the full committee hearing [here](#).

Introduction of NIH IMPROVE Act in the Senate

On April 26, U.S. Senators Laphonza Butler (CA) and Katie Britt (AL) introduced the [NIH IMPROVE Act](#), the Senate companion to Representative Lauren Underwood's (IL-14) and Brian Fitzpatrick's (PA-1) House bill, which would ensure continued funding for research on the maternal care and mortality crisis happening in the U.S.

In 2019, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) launched the Implementing a Maternal Health and Pregnancy Outcomes Vision for Everyone (IMPROVE) Initiative. The IMPROVE Initiative supports research to reduce preventable causes of maternal deaths and improve health care for women before, during, and after pregnancy. However, this critical research program lacks a sustained funding source, threatening research outcomes and conclusions. The NIH IMPROVE Act would authorize consistent funding for this existing program for the next seven years, providing NIH the support and resources to pursue research into the root causes of America's maternal mortality crisis.

Not sure if your Representatives support the NIH Improve Act? A list of House cosponsors can be found, [here](#) and a list of Senate cosponsors is [here](#). The full text of the bill can be viewed [here](#).

Black Maternal Health Week Resolution

On April 17, U.S. Senators Cory Booker (NJ) and Laphonza Butler (CA) along with U.S. Representatives Alma Adams (NC-12) and Lauren Underwood (IL-14), introduced a resolution recognizing April 11 through April 17 as [Black Maternal Health Week](#). This resolution serves to bring national attention to the maternal health crisis in the United States and the critical need to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity rates among Black mothers.

"During Black Maternal Health Week we recognize maternal health disparities and recommit to creating a world where maternal justice and equality are a reality," said Congresswoman Alma S. Adams, Ph.D., co-founder and co-chair of the Black Maternal Health Caucus. "We are working diligently to pass the full Momnibus Act package to comprehensively address existing gaps in policy solutions to the maternal health crisis. We must act urgently to address this crisis, because our mamas can't wait."

To read the full text of the resolution, click [here](#).

Black Maternal Health Caucus 5th Anniversary Panel and Reception

On April 11, the Black Maternal Health Caucus celebrated its 5th anniversary with a panel and reception hosted by CINQCARE. The panel was moderated by Dr. Cheryl Rucker-Whitaker, the president of CINQCARE Illinois. As the cochairs of the Black Maternal Health Caucus, Representatives Alma Adams (NC-12) and Lauren Underwood (IL-14) spoke at the panel, as well as Jean Moody-Williams, the Deputy Director for Center for Clinical Standards and Quality and Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services and Dr. Melanie Egorin, the Assistant Secretary for Legislation at Health and Human Services (HHS).

A big thanks to everyone who attended the Panel and Reception Celebrating the 5th Anniversary of the Black Maternal Health Caucus, as well as CINQCARE for hosting the event.

Watch the full event [here](#) and see photos of the panel [here](#), and photos of the reception [here](#).

Virtual Stakeholder Update for Black Maternal Health Week 2024

On April 16th, Representatives Alma Adams (NC-12) and Lauren Underwood (IL-14) hosted the Black Maternal Health Caucus's Virtual Stakeholder Update for Black Maternal Health Week 2024.

Both representatives gave live remarks, along with Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Xavier Becerra, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Administrator Carole Johnson, and Amy Gilbert, Senior Health Policy Advisor for the Office of the Vice President. Senators Cory Booker (NJ), Laphonza Butler (CA), and Raphael Warnock (GA), as well as Dr. Dora

Hughes, the Acting Chief Medical Officer and Acting Director of the Center for Clinical Standards and Quality and Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services provided prerecorded remarks.

Watch a recording of the event [here](#).

May Community Spotlight

As part of Black Maternal Health Week, two of our incredible partners, The Black Mamas Matter Alliance (BMMA) and 4Kira4Moms hosted the [Black Maternal Health Walk & Block Party](#) on Saturday, April 13th. Attendees engaged in workshops and accessed vital information on community resources and support services. From celebrating the resilience of Black mothers to promoting education and awareness, the event echoed the alliance's unwavering commitment to fostering a safe, educational, and joyful community for birthing individuals worldwide.

The Black Mamas Matter Alliance (BMMA) and 4Kira4Moms are two organizations dedicated to championing maternal health equity and advocating for the well-being of Black mothers and birthing individuals. BMMA, founded in 2018, is a collective of individuals and organizations committed to advancing maternal health, rights, and justice. With a focus on centering the experiences and needs of Black mamas, BMMA strives to address systemic inequities in healthcare and support systems.

4Kira4Moms was founded by Charles Johnson after the tragic loss of his wife Kira Johnson due to childbirth complications in 2016. 4Kira4Moms advocates for improved maternal health policies and regulations, educates about the impact of maternal mortality in our communities, provides support to victims' loved ones, and approaches maternal mortality as a human rights issue.

Read more about the Black Mamas Matter Alliance [here](#) and 4Kira4Moms [here](#).

Are you or the organization you're working with passionate about maternal health? Send us an email about your work to be featured in our next newsletter!

Maternal Health in the News

- **Public Health Reports:** [Evaluation of Implicit Bias Training in Continuing Medical and Nursing Education to Address Racial Bias in Maternity Health Care Settings](#)
- **Journal of Racial and Ethnic Disparities:** [Listening to Black Pregnant and Postpartum People: Using Technology to Enhance Equity in Screening and Treatment of Perinatal Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders](#)
- **Medical Humanities:** [Portals to the past and bridges to the future: exploring the impact of doulas on the birthing experiences of black and Latinx women](#)
- **CBS News:** [Black Maternal Health Week shines light on alarming disparities, as CDC reports rising death rates](#)
- **Stateline:** [To close racial gap in maternal health, some states take aim at implicit bias](#)
- **New York Times:** [Penny Simkin, 'Mother of the Doula Movement,' Dies at 85](#)
- **WAND:** [Proposal improving Illinois Black maternal healthcare moving to Senate](#)
- **Chicago Suntimes:** [Endeavor Health launches study to target C-section rates, disparities in Black birthing patients](#)
- **Washington State Standard:** [There's a renewed push in Congress for Medicaid to cover doulas and midwives](#)

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