

# LISTENING TO AND JUSTLY PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITY-LED PERINATAL HEALTH SOLUTIONS

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## *Insights and Recommendations*

State Title V/Maternal and Child Health (MCH) programs across the United States are eager to implement solutions created with communities to urgently close racial disparities in maternal health outcomes. There are countless programs across the nation, some just forming and others around for decades or more, designed and implemented by Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other thought leaders of color that are community-led and rooted, actively counteracting toxic stress and structural violence that produce inequitable outcomes, and have been deemed effective by the communities who use these services. However, only a small proportion of these efforts have been equitably recognized and resourced by public health and health care practitioners and institutions.

What would it take to partner with community programs?

### ***For Physicians and Clinic Staff***

- Respect when midwives and doulas are part of a patient's care team and partner with them to deliver the best birth outcomes.
- Community programs aim to operate in parallel with providing services and resources distinct from traditional medical systems (e.g. filling the emotional and social needs of patients).
- These programs need the support of the medical community, partnering allows the programs to provide immediate referrals to people who need them.

### ***For Public Health Professionals and Policymakers***

- Community programs provide a supportive environment realigns power dynamics and empowers families.
- Patients turn to these programs because they are more accessible.
- Acknowledge and support these community-based systems of care as legitimate and evidence-based.
- Midwives, doulas, and other community-rooted perinatal health workers struggle for legitimacy due to regulations, barriers to entering hospitals, and a lack of income sources (e.g. midwives are unable to bill Medicaid or other insurance providers).
- These programs require investment from local, state, and federal entities in order to be sustainable.

Partnering with community organizations focused on delivering quality and culturally-congruent care is a win-win for everyone involved. [Click here](#) for the full report.