



MDMOM Program Successfully Coordinates the First Maternal Health Task Force in Maryland

The [MDMOM Program](#), a collaboration between Johns Hopkins University (lead), Maryland Department of Health, Maryland Patient Safety Center and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, brought together the first statewide Maternal Health Task Force in Maryland to optimize the health and wellbeing of pregnant and postpartum women in Maryland. The Task Force will provide recommendations on priorities and goals for maternal health and contribute to a 5-year Strategic Plan for the state of Maryland. This plan will build on Maryland's 2020 Title V Needs Assessment as well as on-going maternal health data and programs in the state and the need to address racial-ethnic disparities in the maternal health outcomes in the state.

"I want to stress the disparities in how this burden is distributed among women and families of Maryland is really critical. Black women have nearly twice the chance of developing severe complications and nearly three times the risk of dying from pregnancy-related conditions than white women. We cannot tolerate these disparities any longer." [**Jheanelle Wilkins**, Maryland House of Delegates, District 20 – Montgomery County].

The Task Force is chaired by the Maryland Department of Health and brings together a diverse group of key stakeholders, including officials from state health governing bodies, departments, and agencies; professional organizations; maternity health care providers; insurance payers; patient advocacy groups; and local community organizations.

"In the past, our state had greatly benefitted from the work of Task Forces focused on maternal and infant or maternal and child issues at the same time. For the first time, we have a statewide Task Force centered around maternal health, recognizing that we need healthy mothers to have healthy and happy infants, children and families." [**Courtney McFadden**, Deputy Director, Prevention and Health Promotion Administration - Maryland Department of Health].

Given the COVID-19 pandemic, the first Task Force meeting was held virtually and comprised two webinars. The first webinar, held on [March 30, 2020](#), discussed Task Force goals and membership, provided an overview of the innovative MDMOM Program, and established five working groups to address key questions around Data, Policy, Quality Improvement, Telemedicine and Training Innovation.

"Our success will depend, in large part, on the ability of the members of this Maryland Maternal Health Task Force and the agencies represented to help guide the implementation of programs such as the MDMOM Program." [**Michelle Spencer**, Associate Scientist at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Associate Director of the Bloomberg American Health Initiative].

Over the month of April, workgroup leads consolidated the feedback received from the Task Force and developed summary recommendations for maternal health in the state. A second webinar on [April 30, 2020](#) provided an opportunity to share these recommendations with all Task Force members and outline the next steps for developing the Maryland Maternal Health Strategic Plan.