

New Jersey's Response to Expanding Health Equity and Healthcare in Underserved Communities

April 2022

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Colette Lamothe-Galette Community Health Worker Institute

- The NJ Department of Health (NJDOH) established the Colette Lamothe-Galette (CLG) Community Health Worker Institute in May 2020.
- The goal of the Institute is to create a standardized Community Health Worker (CHW) training and certification program, resulting in a robust CHW workforce.
- Through this work, the NJDOH will create career pipelines for CHWs, enhance CHW skill sets and lead sustainability efforts to support community health care workers.

Who are Community Health Workers?

- **Individuals from the community willing to serve the community;**
- **Speakers for those who are disenfranchised;**
- **Trusted advisors;**
- **Agents to help address the social determinants of health;**
- **Empathetic listeners;**
- **Problem solvers;**
- **Solution providers;**
- **Hope providers – whose mission is to help families get back on their feet and stay there with the needed resources.**

- **Let me share with you a “Day in the Life of a CHW”**

Building Capacity through DOH's Emerging Leaders Program

The New Jersey Department of Health's Emerging Leaders Program was designed in partnership with Princeton AlumniCorps, who are experts in nonprofit leadership development with 11 years of experience in leadership training.

This is a free, virtual training intended to be provided to NJDOH-supported Community Health Workers. The program aims to enhance the skills, knowledge and confidence needed to grow in leadership and provide support for career advancement.

This program consists of 10 sessions each Wednesday from March 16th to May 18th, 2022, via the Zoom platform.



Building Capacity through DOH's Emerging Leaders Program

- **Connection to Princeton AlumniCorps;**
- **Class of 14 engaged in leadership training over the course of XX sessions;**
- **Coaching platform for CHWs;**
- **Designed to help CHWs develop and build upon core competencies to include leadership;**
- **Helping CHWs get to the next level;**
- **Provides safe and brave space to describe experiences, voice concerns and share mistakes without the fear of punishment, embarrassment and retribution;**
- **Includes a stretch project;**
- **What the Emerging Leaders Program has meant to me**

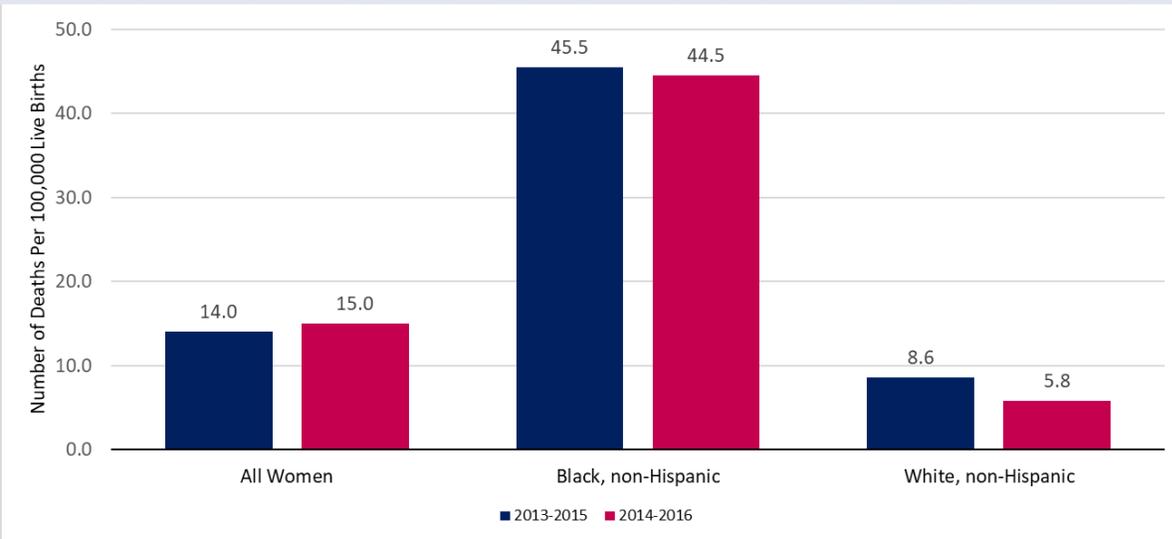
NEW JERSEY STEPS TO MEDICAID DOULA BENEFIT

New Jersey Steps to Medicaid's Doula Benefit

- Identify the Needs
- Listen to the Community of Focus
- Engaged a Multidisciplinary Team
- Align with State Initiatives

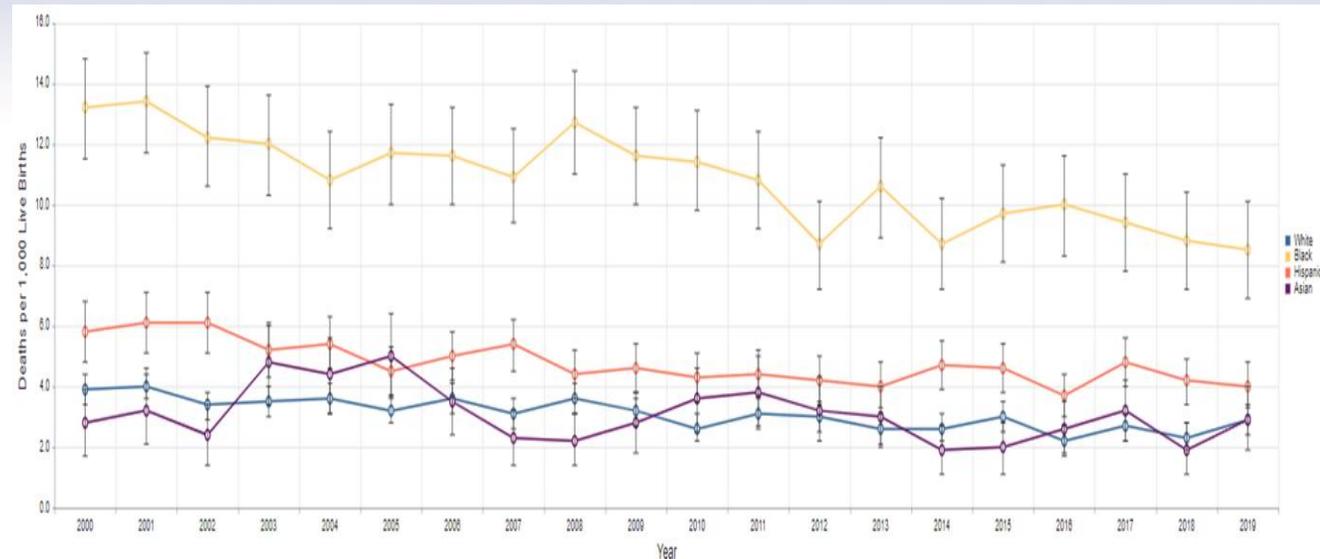
Identify the Need: The Data: Racial/Ethnic Disparities in New Jersey

Pregnancy- Related Mortality Ratios by Race/Ethnicity, New Jersey 2013-2016



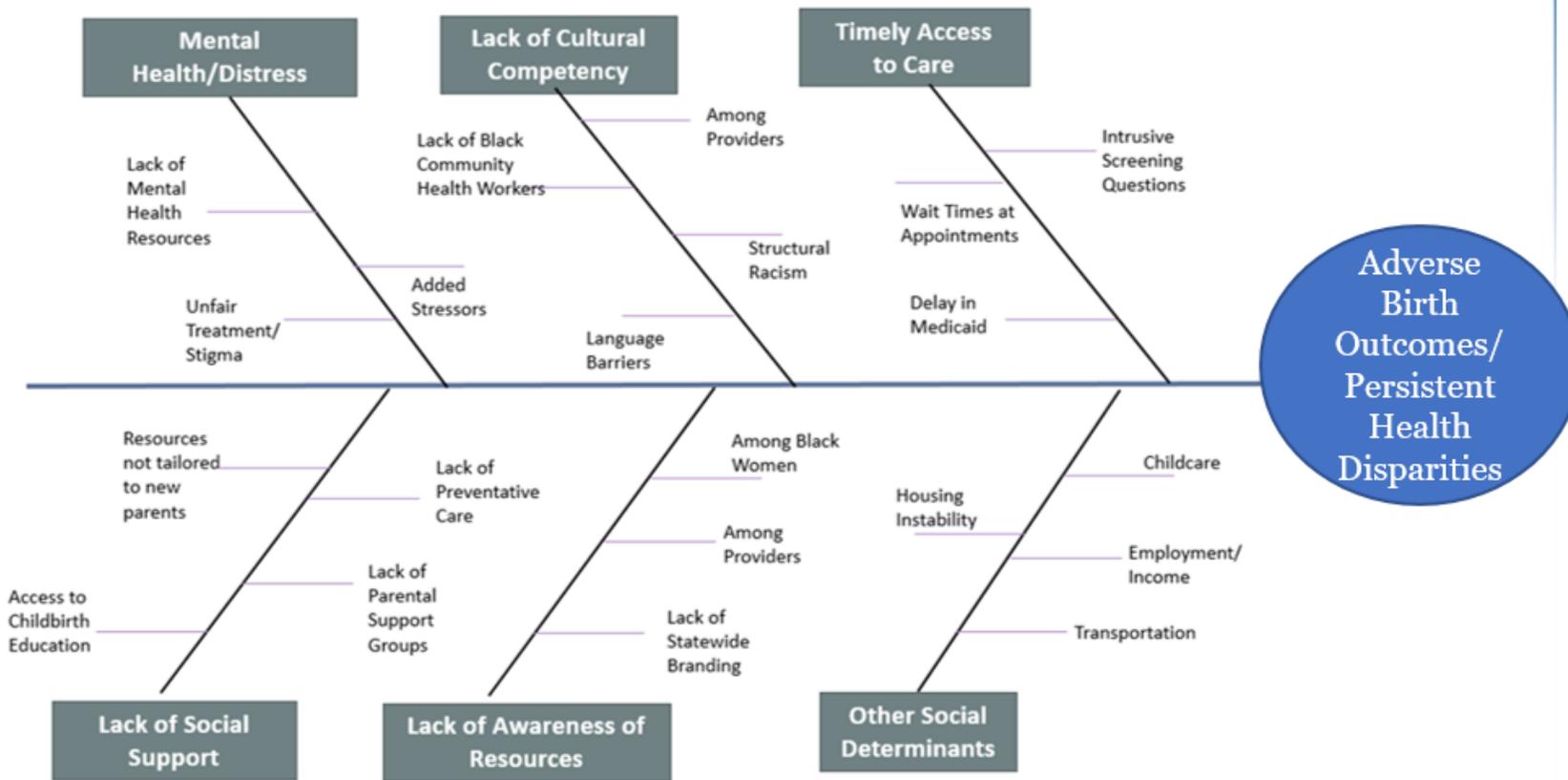
Data Source: Maternal Mortality New Jersey: 2014-2016 (2021). Maternal Mortality review Committee, NJ Department of Health

Infant Mortality by Race/Ethnicity, New Jersey 2000-2019



Data Source: New Jersey State Health Assessment Data (NJSHAD - Health Indicator Report - Infant Mortality Rate (state.nj.us))

Listen to the Communities - Focus Groups



Outcome:
Establishment of a Sustainable non-traditional Perinatal Workforce
(e.g., Culturally Competent Community Doulas and Community Health Workers)

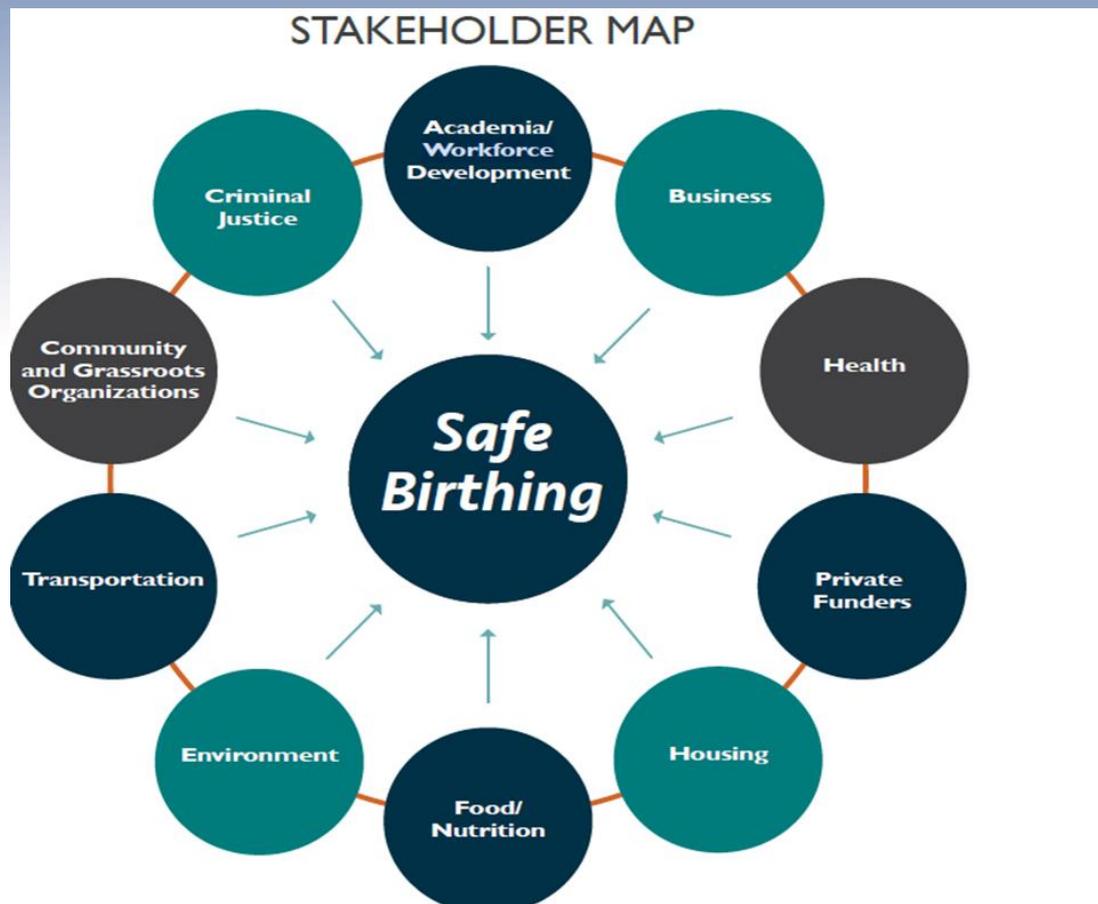
Doula Pilot Program Implementation & Results

- **From 2018- 2021 grantee agencies**
 - recruited and trained nearly 80 new doulas,
 - Served more than 700 pregnant people during pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period.
- **Result from Evaluation Report**
 - The services provided through the Doula Pilot Program were reported to be meaningful and had critical value to the doulas and clients.
 - Lower rates of cesarean sections; and increase rates of breastfeeding

Key positive birth outcomes for economically disadvantage clients who received services from a doula during the pilot project → **Warrant the need for expansion of Medicaid benefits to cover doula services**



Engage a Multidisciplinary Team



- *State agencies*
- *Non-profit organizations*
- *Community-based organizations & Community members*
- *Health insurance companies*



Align with State Initiatives Nurture New Jersey

1. Build racial equity infrastructure and capacity
- 2. *Support community infrastructures for power-building***
3. Engage multiple sectors
4. Shift mindsets to increase support for action
5. Strengthen public policy to support conditions for health in New Jersey
6. Generate and more widely disseminate data
- 7. *Change institutional structures to accommodate innovation***
8. Address the social determinants of health
9. Improve the quality of care and service delivery to individuals

Learn more:
nuturenj.nj.gov



New Jersey Medicaid coverage for doula care: Jan 1, 2021

- A1664/S 1784--This bill provides for the expansion of the State Medicaid program to include coverage for doula care through the language AMENDED P.L.1968, c.413 to add 'Doulas'
- And clarified the Commissioner of Human Services "shall apply for such State plan amendments or waivers as may be necessary to implement the provisions."

Sustainability: MEDICAID Coverage for NJ Community Doula



Moving Forward

- **Continue to operationalize community doula benefit through enrollment/contracting/claims submission**
- **Increase awareness about community doula support**
- **Continue to build our community doula workforce**
 - DOH funded a new cohort of community doula trainees through HWHF

What can public health teach the “traditional” health system?

- **Non-traditional perinatal workers as the boots on the ground they have**
 - the inherent local knowledge
 - the understanding that enables them to provide equitable and culturally responsive care to pregnant people during pregnancy, birth, and postpartum
- **Including them in the “traditional” multidisciplinary perinatal team is essential**
- Learn from community members with lived experiences

*Thank
you*

