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Practice Summary & Implementation Guidance

Champion Dyad Initiative

The Champion Dyad Initiative (CDI) is a quality improvement initiative led by SisterWeb that aims to ensure that birthing people of color receive fair and equitable treatment during their births and pregnancies by establishing a partnership with maternal care providers that act as "champions" for patients and doulas at their clinical sites and engage in bi-directional feedback with SisterWeb to better support doulas and families from Black and Latinx communities in San Francisco.

| Cutting-Edge | Emerging | Promising | Best |

Location	Topic Area	Setting
San Francisco, CA	Preconception/Reproductive Health	Community, Clinical

Population Focus	NPM	Date Added
Women/Maternal Health	Risk Appropriate Perinatal Care, Breastfeeding	September 2023

Contact Information
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PRACTICE DESCRIPTION

The Champion Dyad Initiative (CDI) is a quality improvement initiative SisterWeb has led since 2019. Through the CDI, SisterWeb facilitates monthly sessions with one or two "champions" working within the San Francisco maternal health care systems where Black and Latinx mothers receive perinatal care. CDI sessions are a mechanism to establish and develop institutional and interpersonal relationships that result in women of color receiving fair and equitable treatment during their births and pregnancies and to elevate the professionalism and dignity of community doulas within clinical settings.

CDI sessions create opportunities

1. For bidirectional feedback between SisterWeb and maternal care providers,
2. For Black and Latinx clients to give input about the hospital setting and the care they received
3. To integrate doulas as core members of care teams and systems.

The goals that the CDI are working to achieve include:

- Site/Hospital Providers and Clinical Staff who understand the SisterWeb Community Doula Model and are referring all eligible patients in a way that respects community and birthworkers.

- Site/Hospital Providers and SisterWeb staff work collaboratively to identify population data related to birth outcomes and increase awareness at each site regarding current inequities and quality improvement needed.

- SisterWeb Doula programs have close working relationships with providers and clinical staff, building respect between roles and sharing of resources and feedback.

- With the support of CDI sites, SisterWeb programs effectively and efficiently are able to collect data related to patient and doula experience and communicate back to hospital sites with a focus on action steps and systemic improvements.

- Site/Hospital Providers and clinical staff support SisterWeb doulas in their professional journeys with consistent, constructive feedback and opportunities for professional growth and skill building.

- All SisterWeb doulas deeply understand the value of CDI and the importance of utilizing/maximizing it as a tool that will help us accomplish our goals.

CORE COMPONENTS & PRACTICE ACTIVITIES

The core components of the CDI are the foundational building blocks to the program and are designed to best achieve the CDI goals outlined in the Practice Description section above. These core components include the site champions, community-building activities, and the referral process.

Core Components & Practice Activities

Core Component	Activities	Operational Details
Champions	- Prepare for and attend regular monthly meetings by collecting feedback from hospital and birth center care teams to share and present at CDI meetings - Assist with data collection and improving the frequency of provider feedback following births with clients - Communicate urgent feedback related to a staff or shared patient/client - Communicate changes and shifts to policy and procedures at respective sites - Suggest and implement changes at their sites, including delivering difficult feedback to coworkers	A care team member that represents one of the SisterWeb client birth sites and ideally holds positional power at their respective site to advocate for systemic change. Champions are passionate about collaborating with doulas, understand SisterWeb's community doula model, and are committed to antiracist practice.
Community-building activities	- Site-specific meet and greets where information about SisterWeb's programs and referral eligibility criteria are presented to clinical staff - Hospital and birth center tours for doulas, where champions review protocols for labor & delivery arrival and show doulas important site-specific features, such as kitchen access or where to find supplies - SisterWeb led trainings for clinical staff such as how to effectively work with doulas	Community-building activities serve as opportunities for SisterWeb staff and clinical site staff to establish interpersonal relationships and build mutual respect between one another. Activities elevate doulas' presence in systems of care, raise awareness of positive implications of doula care in maternal health outcomes, and develop professional rapport with medical care teams beyond those attending the CDI sessions
Referral Process	- Champions educate clinical colleagues about SisterWeb's programs and services and how to refer eligible patients	Providers that encounter patients who are interested in doula care and are eligible for one of SisterWeb's doula programs - Kindred Birth Companions for Black pregnant individuals and Semilla Sagrada for Latinx pregnant individuals - are referred to SisterWeb. Champions and SisterWeb representatives are consistently collaborating to identify ways to strengthen the referral process.

HEALTH EQUITY

Maternal mortality and morbidity rates are significantly higher for Black and Brown mothers and birthing people as compared to their White counterparts. These health disparities are seen because of issues surrounding inequitable access to perinatal care and systemic racial bias from healthcare providers and institutions. Doula care helps enhance the medical care that Black and Brown pregnant individuals receive and has positive and often immediate influence on hospitals and care teams. Creating pre-established channels for bi-directional feedback and relationship building between providers and doulas elevates the incidences of reported racial bias within institutions, and builds in a quality improvement strategy that takes into account the voices of communities most impacted from racism.

Recent legislation passed in the state of California recommending that all Black mothers and birthing individuals should have access to free and competent doula care, however many healthcare institutions, clinical staff, and communities of color that would most benefit from doula care remain under-informed about its scope and the benefits it has for comprehensive patient care and maternal health outcomes. SisterWeb is a community-rooted nonprofit that offers free community doula care specifically to Black and Latinx birthing families, with doulas of the same race, culture, and ethnicity as the families they work with.

SisterWeb's Champion Dyad Initiative provides a direct line of bi-directional communication between clinical staff and doulas, which increases opportunities for effective collaboration during and beyond medical appointments and labor and delivery. The implementation of the CDI actively works towards the goal of increasing equitable care for Black and Brown birthing families and dismantling racist healthcare systems.

EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

SisterWeb utilizes Clear Impact Scorecard as a reporting software and Clear Impact Compyle as a case management software. These web-based softwares allow SisterWeb to organize and manage data collection, as well as to evaluate and report performance measures related to the Champion Dyad Initiative. Compyle is HIPPA compliant and houses all of SisterWeb's client, staff, and community forms, demographic information, surveys, and meeting notes, including the CDI Provider Feedback Forms, the CDI Doula Feedback Forms, and the CDI Meeting Tracker. Monthly CDI meeting agendas and notes from all 5 CDI sites are stored in a shared SisterWeb Google Drive.

The questions in the CDI Provider Feedback Form were developed based on extensive feedback directly from clinical providers and the CDI Doula Feedback Form was co-created with all of the doulas and staff at SisterWeb. The Meeting Tracker Notes allow SisterWeb to track quantitative data such as the number of CDI monthly meetings, while the CDI Meeting Agendas provide qualitative data that can be analyzed to show trends and common themes related to the initiative. Through these forms, SisterWeb is able to access information related to client and doula experiences at sites and develop performance measures that evaluate the CDI's impact on systemic improvements within hospital sites. These performance measures are summarized into yearly reports that are presented to all the CDI sites and to SisterWeb staff, which creates space to discuss action steps and improvements.

SisterWeb currently tracks 11 performance measures that are aligned with the Champion Dyad Initiative's and SisterWeb's organizational goals. Many of these performance measures are related to the levels at which SisterWeb clients and doulas feel respected by medical staff at hospital sites, and the other performance measures relate to the instances of coordination and bi-directional feedback between SisterWeb and hospital sites. These measures are all targeted for quality improvement and to reduce systemic racism, inequitable

treatment, and instances of disrespect that SisterWeb's Black and Latinx clients and doulas may experience at the sites by focusing on building a partnership centered on accountability.

These performance measures include:

- The number of referrals to SisterWeb overall
- The number of referrals from each CDI site to SisterWeb
- The average level reported by SW Clients of feeling supported, heard and respected by their medical providers during the pregnancy/birth/postpartum time period
- The number of monthly Champion Dyad meetings between Medical representatives and SisterWeb representatives
- The number of sites participating in the Champion Dyad Initiative
- The average level of respect from nursing staff reported by SisterWeb doulas
- The average level of respect from other medical providers reported by SisterWeb doulas
- The number of instances of coordination of care between SW staff and medical staff outside of CDI monthly meetings
- The percent of doulas who gave feedback directly to medical staff In the hospital when they did not feel respected or felt that their client was not receiving respectful care
- The number of instances that medical staff provide feedback for SisterWeb after working with SisterWeb doulas
- The number of instances that doulas provide feedback for CDI Sites

SisterWeb 22-23 Fiscal Year CDI Report Data	
Performance Measure	**Data**
The number of referrals to SisterWeb overall	409
The number of referrals from each CDI site to SisterWeb	120 ZSFGH, 57 Kaiser, 41 UCSF, 19 Sutter CPMC, 15 SFBC
The average level reported by SW Clients of feeling supported, heard and respected by their medical providers during the pregnancy/birth/postpartum time period (1-10)	8.88
The number of monthly Champion Dyad meetings between Medical representatives and SisterWeb representatives	38
The number of sites participating in the Champion Dyad Initiative	5
The average level of respect from nursing staff reported by SisterWeb doulas (1-10)	8.63

The average level of respect from other medical providers reported by SisterWeb doulas (1-10)	8.71
The number of instances of coordination of care between SW staff and medical staff outside of CDI monthly meetings	45
The percent of doulas who gave feedback directly to medical staff In the hospital when they did not feel respected or felt that their client was not receiving respectful care	71.53%
The number of instances that medical staff provide feedback for SisterWeb after working with SisterWeb doulas	9
The number of instances that doulas provide feedback for CDI Sites	55

SisterWeb is actively working to develop the Champion Dyad Initiative's measures and evaluation methodology. A few ways SisterWeb is planning to do this is through holding additional stakeholder interviews and by developing an incident tracker that documents the follow-up and resolution of feedback collected in our CDI surveys. This tracker will be updated by the CDI manager and can provide both quantitative and qualitative data related to long term impact and accountability measures by site. The tracker will also ensure that the communication loop is closed so the client and/or doula who reported the incident can hear back regarding action steps taken to address any harm.

SisterWeb holds Bi-annual All CDI Site Meetings that creates a space to discuss successes and challenges. During this, SisterWeb staff and CDI Site Champions are encouraged to start conversations, ask questions, and raise concerns related to how we can improve our partnership to better provide equitable and safe experiences for our clients during their pregnancy journey. Additionally, SisterWeb has been partnering with a research team at the University of California, Berkeley to effectively describe and evaluate the CDI model and the lessons that have been learned thus far. SisterWeb has already been identifying some lessons learned based on frequent data analysis and by utilizing the 'Turn the Curve' method from the Results-Based Accountability framework to make improvements. To give an example of this, the number of eligible referrals from CDI providers at the beginning of SisterWeb was very low, and as a team SisterWeb identified a need for increased in-person meet and greets and trainings for providers to best inform them about how, why, and when to refer patients to SisterWeb. Through doing this, SisterWeb was able to see increased numbers of eligible referrals from sites.

COLLABORATORS AND PARTNERS

Practice Collaborators and Partners			
Partner/ Collaborator	**How are they involved in decision-making throughout practice processes?**	**How are you partnering with this group?**	**Does this stakeholder have lived experience/come from a community impacted by the practice?**
Expecting Justice	Although Expecting Justice is no longer involved in CDI activities, the organization played a significant role in the early launch of the CDI through leveraging connections to be able to recruit champions at clinical sites and in co-hosting the CDI orientation where the goals of the CDI were set and next steps were discussed.	Expecting Justice was a key partner in co-developing the CDI and worked with SisterWeb to identify stakeholders in the healthcare system who understood the benefits of doula care in addressing racial birth inequities.	Yes
Sutter Health California Pacific Medical Center	Champions from Sutter Health CPMC engage in bi-directional feedback with SisterWeb staff at CDI monthly meetings and discuss successes and challenges at Bi-annual CDI All Site meetings for improvements to the CDI processes	SisterWeb has elicited CDI champions from Sutter Health CPMC because it is one of the locations where SisterWeb's Black and Latinx clients receive maternal health care in San Francisco.	No
UCSF Medical Center	Champions from UCSF Medical Center engage in bi-directional feedback with SisterWeb staff at CDI monthly meetings and discuss successes and challenges at Bi-annual CDI All Site meetings for	Champions from UCSF Medical Center engage in bi-directional feedback with SisterWeb staff at CDI monthly meetings and discuss successes and challenges at Bi-annual CDI All Site meetings for	No

	improvements to the CDI processes	improvements to the CDI processes	
Kaiser Permanente	Champions from Kaiser Permanente engage in bi-directional feedback with SisterWeb staff at CDI monthly meetings and discuss successes and challenges at Bi-annual CDI All Site meetings for improvements to the CDI processes.	SisterWeb has elicited CDI champions from Kaiser Permanente because it is one of the locations where SisterWeb's Black and Latinx clients receive maternal health care in San Francisco	No
Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital	Champions from Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital engage in bi-directional feedback with SisterWeb staff at CDI monthly meetings and discuss successes and challenges at Bi-annual CDI All Site meetings for improvements to the CDI processes	SisterWeb has elicited CDI champions from Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital because it is one of the locations where SisterWeb's Black and Latinx clients receive maternal health care in San Francisco	No
San Francisco Birth Center	Champions from San Francisco Birth Center engage in bi-directional feedback with SisterWeb staff at CDI monthly meetings and discuss successes and challenges at Bi-annual CDI All Site meetings for improvements to the CDI processes.	SisterWeb has elicited CDI champions from San Francisco Birth Center because it is one of the locations where SisterWeb's Black and Latinx clients receive maternal health care in San Francisco	No

REPLICATION

The Champion Dyad Initiative has been a key quality improvement program that SisterWeb has been implementing over the last few years in San Francisco, but until recently has not been described to the public for opportunities to be replicated in a new setting. At this time, this practice has not been replicated elsewhere. With the inclusion of the CDI in the Innovation Hub database, SisterWeb looks forward to the replication and adaptation of this practice in other settings to reach more birthing people and families of color.

SisterWeb has highlighted implementation expectation guidelines for SisterWeb staff and clinical site staff that can be utilized by other organizations for more effective replication in new settings.

Implementation Expectations: SisterWeb Staff

- SisterWeb Staff focus on cultural competency, educating hospital staff on specific nature of SW community doula model, peer support/ culturally and linguistically congruent support.
- SisterWeb staff build in ongoing inclusion of feedback channels by supporting clients during appointments, reframing the fear of repercussions for negative feedback and bridging families with providers directly to increase capacity to navigate the hospital with confidence.
- SisterWeb staff design a form for feedback that doulas and providers can use. These forms are then viewed prior to monthly dyad meetings at each site and provide content for the bidirectional feedback portion of the meetings.
- Build rapport between SisterWeb doulas and hospital staff through mixers or other fun events (on-line or in person). SisterWeb will also provide a face sheet of all doulas to be posted at sites for providers and nursing staff.

Implementation Expectations: Clinical Site Staff

- Hospital reps hold positional power, will champion anti-racism work at their site, will act as an accountability partner, and are able to bring difficult feedback to colleagues at their sites.
- Create increased opportunities for community building and staff education at their site. Dyad reps can connect SW doula programs with individual providers that are interested in supporting birth equity.
- Dyad reps help coordinate Doula / Nurse bonding activities so we understand how to work together, and expand communication to providers beyond L&D (Pediatrics, Lactation, Nutrition).
- Dyad reps provide logistical and administrative support to the overall initiative. This is done by strengthening the referral process and by creating a written channel of communicating for changes to hospital protocols and procedures to SW reps so information isn't delivered in pieces.
- Dyad reps are point people for addressing issues when SW doulas are working within the hospital site. They will provide a cell phone number to call in case of emergency (2 different hospital staff people willing to field these calls).

INTERNAL CAPACITY

1. **SisterWeb Representatives:**

   a. **Executive Director**: SisterWeb's Executive Director provides whole initiative support.
   b. **SisterWeb Doulas**: SisterWeb doula Interact with both clients and providers during appointments and labor and delivery and provide feedback to evaluate treatment at clinical sites and effectiveness of CDI implementation.
   c. **Kindred Birth Companions (KBC) Doula Coordinator**: Doula coordinator for SisterWeb's Black doulas and families program, KBC, collects doula feedback to be discussed at CDI monthly meetings and acts as a point-person for bi-directional feedback between KBC doulas and site champions.

d. **Semilla Sagrada (SS) Doula Coordinator:** Doula coordinator for SisterWeb's Latinx doulas and families program, SS, collects doula feedback to be discussed at CDI monthly meetings and acts as a point-person for bi-directional feedback between SS doulas and site champions.

e. **Director of Doula Programs**: SisterWeb's Director of Doula Programs provides whole initiative support and reviews doula and provider feedback forms to discuss with champions in CDI monthly meetings.

f. **Community Resource Coordinator**: SisterWeb's Community Resource Coordinator provides whole initiative support and reviews doula and provider feedback forms to discuss with champions in CDI monthly meetings.

g. **Evaluations Director and Evaluations Team**: SisterWeb Evaluations Team, reviews trends in the CDI data from provider, doula, and client surveys to better understand successes and areas of improvements to the CDI.

h. **Communications Coordinator**: SisterWeb's Communications Coordinator creates flyers, social media toolkits, and assists in the production of events related to SisterWeb work and the CDI

2. **Clinical Site Providers:**

   a. **One to two champions from each respective clinical site** engaging in the CDI - ZSFGH, Kaiser, UCSF, Sutter CPMC, SFBC. Each champion engages in monthly CDI meetings, attends All-site Bi-annual CDI meetings, and are available to contact in case of issues arising.

PRACTICE TIMELINE

Phase: Planning/Pre-Implementation		
Activity Description	**Time Needed**	**Responsible Party**
SisterWeb leadership created the organizational infrastructure, hired administrative staff and launched its three doula programs	8-9 months	SisterWeb
Utilized connections to recruit champions from four hospitals and one birth center in San Francisco	1-2 months	SisterWeb and Expecting Justice
CDI Orientation: attended by all site champions; attendees participated in icebreakers, reviewed birth equity	One-time orientation (April 2019)	SisterWeb and Expecting Justice

vocabulary, quality improvement tools, and how to engage in respectful communication; CDI goals and next steps were reviewed

Phase: Implementation

Activity Description	Time Needed	Responsible Party
SisterWeb doula all site tours and meet and greets	Occurred two times: one initial tour/meet and greet and an updated tour/meet and greet during the COVID pandemic	SisterWeb and Clinical Sites (ZSFGH, Kaiser, Sutter CPMC, UCSF, SFBC)
Clinical site referrals to SisterWeb	On-going	SisterWeb and Clinical Sites (ZSFGH, Kaiser, Sutter CPMC, UCSF, SFBC)
CDI providers and doulas fill out CDI monthly feedback forms	On-going, monthly	SisterWeb and Clinical Sites (ZSFGH, Kaiser, Sutter CPMC, UCSF, SFBC)
CDI monthly meetings with bi-directional feedback exchange between SisterWeb CDI representatives and Site Champions	On-going, monthly	SisterWeb and Clinical Site Champions (ZSFGH, Kaiser, Sutter CPMC, UCSF, SFBC)

Phase: Sustainability

Activity Description	Time Needed	Responsible Party
CDI All Site Bi-Annual Meeting for discussion on successes, challenges, and improvements	On-going, twice a year	SisterWeb and Clinical Site Champions (ZSFGH, Kaiser, Sutter CPMC, UCSF, SFBC)

Evaluate CDI indicators and metrics to visualize trends and areas of improvement	On-going, at the end of each fiscal year	SisterWeb Evaluations Team

For more information on this practice's timeline and specific practice activities, please contact Alli Cuentos directly at a.cuentos@sisterweb.org.

PRACTICE COST

SisterWeb's Community Resource Coordinator is paid for 20 hours per month for the time spent engaging in CDI activities. Other SisterWeb staff are paid for 2-4 hours per month for the time spent engaging in CDI activities.

For more information on this practice's startup costs and budgets, please contact Alli Cuentos directly at a.cuentos@sisterweb.org.

LESSONS LEARNED

Based on SisterWeb's experiences with the Champion Dyad Initiative since 2019, the lessons learned in planning, implementation, and sustaining this practice include:

- Identifying and recruiting individual site champions who are passionate about community doula care, are committed to antiracist practice, and have positional power within their department is important for creating change

- Engaging in bidirectional feedback opens up opportunities for better collaboration and understanding between providers and doulas and allows both parties to hold each other accountable

- Utilizing data collection and evaluation to improve and measure the impact of the CDI program allows for the CDI to be an evolving practice

NEXT STEPS

With the Champion Dyad Initiative still being an emerging practice, it is continuously being evaluated and modified to best serve doulas and clients and improve partnerships with clinical sites. Based on feedback received from doulas, providers, clients, and site champions in feedback forms, at CDI monthly meetings and at Bi-annual All-site meetings, SisterWeb is working on ways to improve the CDI's capacity for more effective quality improvement. Next steps include:

1. **CDI Incident Accountability Tracker**: To move towards more actionable steps surrounding feedback from clients or doulas regarding issues or negative incidents during encounters or labor/delivery, SisterWeb is in the process of creating a CDI Incident Accountability Tracker that will track incidents,

describe and date follow-ups to sites, and describe and date resolutions to these incidents. This is key to holding healthcare systems accountable for issues related to bias and racism experienced by doulas and pregnant people of color and works towards better quality improvement efforts.

2. **Increasing Provider Feedback Form Submissio**n: A key component to SisterWeb's CDI program is bi-directional feedback. SisterWeb is looking for more efficient methods to increase providers' submission of CDI feedback forms that takes into account hectic schedules, but also emphasizes the role that provider feedback has in quality improvement efforts.

3. **Improving the Referral Process**: Based on feedback made during a Bi-annual All-site meeting, SisterWeb is working to make it more clear for providers what the client capacity is for each of SisterWeb's programs and how providers might best prioritize which patients to refer. SisterWeb's Communications Coordinator is working on methods to communicate these to providers better.

4. **Research Paper with UC Berkeley**: SisterWeb has been working with a research team at the University of California, Berkeley on a descriptive paper about the Champion Dyad Initiative, which will allow for more widespread reach to clinical providers and healthcare systems.

RESOURCES PROVIDED

- https://www.sisterweb.org/champion-dyad-initiative

- Champion Dyad Initiative Informational Handout