

BARRIER TO CHANGE:

Extent to which federal and state governments prioritize maternal and infant health equity.

This document describes actions from the [Birth Equity Action Map](#) that can influence the extent to which federal and state governments prioritize maternal and infant health equity, which was identified as a barrier to change using the [Iceberg Model of Systems Thinking](#). Click [here](#) to view these actions in the interactive Birth Equity Action Map.



ACTION



DESCRIPTION



RESPONSIBLE SYSTEM ACTORS

<p>Collaborate across federal agencies to maximize impact³</p>	<p>Federal agencies have the power to collaborate with each other to ensure that all agencies are aligned on priorities and metrics pertaining to MCH to reduce duplicative efforts. Federal agencies can also ensure that equity is central in the grant application processes, that these processes are streamlined, and implement trust-based funding principles to support grantee flexibility and impact.</p>	<p>Federal Agencies</p>
<p>Ensure equitable, trauma-informed, patient-centered care^{1,3,4}</p>	<p>Ensure equitable, trauma-informed, patient-centered care is provided and rooted in reproductive justice. Specifically, this might look like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop community-led governance structures within health systems • Invest in reproductive justice informed peer-to-peer, and community health worker programs • Train providers to deliver respectable maternity care, including respect for the full range of birthing options and patient autonomy • Provide access to peer counselors and lactation specialists to support human milk feeding • Establish breastfeeding-friendly spaces and adhere to the 10 Steps to Successful Breastfeeding. 	<p>Health systems, Hospitals, Payer, Medical and health education programs</p>
<p>Implement collaborative knowledge sharing tools to support families^{3,4}</p>	<p>Implement and disseminate approaches (e.g., collaborative knowledge sharing tools, websites, platforms like Unite Us) to efficiently provide up-to-date information about resources and wrap-around services that can support families.</p>	<p>State and local health agencies, Community-based organizations, Hospitals, Health systems</p>
<p>Screen for needs throughout perinatal period⁴</p>	<p>Screen for physical and mental health and social needs at key points in pregnancy and the postpartum period using robust, culturally responsive screening tools. Co-create and consistently update care plans with the birthing person and facilitate access to the plan by all members of the care team.</p>	<p>Community-based organizations, Health systems, Hospitals</p>
<p>Support cross-state peer learning^{1,3}</p>	<p>Support peer learning across states over time. Specifically, this might look like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer targeted support to help state partners by providing best practices and evidence-based models. • Process, synthesize, and disseminate best practices and emerging evidence. • Bring states together to learn from each other what's working to advance birth equity in their contexts. • Sharing implementation and engagement strategies across Perinatal Quality Collaboratives 	<p>National non-profits, Federal agencies, Private funders</p>



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Sources

Actions were synthesized from a two-part Systems Mapping to Advance Birth Equity workshop with 48 diverse actors representing federal, state, local, community, and family birth equity partners as well as the following recommended recent sources that have called for specific actions to advance birth equity.

1. Black Mamas Matter Alliance (2023). Black Mamas Matter: In Policy and Practice: A policy agenda for the Black maternal health, rights, and justice movement.
2. Institute for Medicaid Innovation (2023). Innovation in Perinatal and Child Health in Medicaid.
3. National Birth Equity Systems Mapping Workshop (2023). AMCHP Virtual Workshop, May and June 2023.
4. National Partnership for Women and Families (2023). Raising the Bar for Maternal Health Equity and Excellence.
5. New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute and The Burke Foundation (2022). Delivering Better Care: Midwifery Practice in New Jersey.

Participating Organizations (in the workshop or feedback sessions)

- Alliance for Early Success
- Birthing Cultural Rigor, LLC
- BirthMatters
- Black Mamas ATX
- CityMatCH
- Family Solutions: A Program of the SC Office of Rural Health
- Funders for Birth Justice and Equity
- Georgetown University Center for Children and Families
- Giving Austin Labor Support
- Greater Newark Health Care Coalition
- Hand to Hold
- Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of Georgia
- HRSA's Maternal and Child Health Bureau
- Institute for Women and Ethnic Studies
- Intermountain Health RMOMS Program
- Mama Sana Vibrant Woman
- Mamatoto Village
- March of Dimes
- Maternal Health Equity Collaborative
- Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance
- Merck for Mothers
- Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center
- National Healthy Start Association
- National Institute for Children's Health Quality
- National Partnership for Women & Families
- Our Journ3i
- Philadelphia Department of Public Health
- Preeclampsia Foundation
- Rhode Island Department of Health
- Sedgwick County Health Department
- St. Joseph County Department of Health
- Starting Out Right
- The BEE Collective
- The Reilly Group
- Trenton Health Team
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture
- U.S. Department of Labor
- Utah Pacific Islander Health Coalition
- University of Washington's Parent-Child Assistance Program

