



Midwifery Working Group
December 7, 2023 | 3:00-4:00pm

Meeting Minutes

Members present: Lucinda Canty, Christy D'Aquila, SciHonor Devotion, Sera Gadbois, Carolyn Greenfield, Daileann Hemmings, Selina Osei, Priya Morganstern, Amy Romano, Michelle Telfer, Kati Villeda

Members absent: Kara Crawford, Camille Grant, Christina Mukon, Gengi Proteau, Kim Sandor, Fatmata Williams, Tanya Willis

DPH Staff: Melia Allan, Chris Andresen, Dante Costa, Elliann Sylvester

Introductions

- Sera asked if members who were new to the conversation wanted to introduce themselves
 - Selina introduced herself – new CHA representative in place of Megan Smith
 - Carolyn Greenfield (joyful homebirth) - practicing for four years
 - Sam Haun – policy director at the CT health foundation --> attending as a guest

Follow-ups from the last meeting

- The group voted to approve the minutes
 - Priya voted to approve the minutes; Christy seconded; all members approved
- Because there were many new faces in the group, members recapped the big themes from previous meetings
 - Out-of-hospital midwives and hospital midwives working together can make the transfer process more smooth
 - The group recapped the hurdles when collaborating with OBs and MFMs
- Melia linked to postings for 10.05 and 11.02 meetings
 - <https://egov.ct.gov/PMC/Event/Details/22627>
 - <https://egov.ct.gov/PMC/Event/Details/23033>

Discussion of the Legislative Report

- Annually, the group submits a report on the activities of the group to the legislature- Melia and Dante have put together a draft that talks about the themes the group has been discussing
- Dante would like to circulate the group among the group and provide a week for the group to give feedback prior to internal review
- Specifically, there is a spot for findings or recommendations – Dante asked if the group if they had thoughts on this section, and let members know they could provide written feedback later
- Sera called for a motion to vote on continuing the group in 2024
 - Priya motioned; Carolyn seconded

- All members present voted in favor of continuing the group in 2024

Hearing Screening Collaboration

- Sera brought up a potential collaboration/speaker for the group on hearing screening, she asked the group if they would be open to having this individual present
 - The group expressed interest in having this speaker
- Sera said that in her experience, hearing screening is often a challenge for midwives, as hearing screening machines are cost prohibitive for midwives
 - On her machine, hearing screenings must be done when the baby is sleeping or not moving
- Daileann expressed that her experience has been different from Sera's for hearing screenings
 - Typically, the baby should be quiet but not necessarily asleep, and the OAE process does not take that long
 - SciHonor added that the machines work best when the baby is very still and the environment is very quiet, but either way midwives need the machines
- Having more ability to access hearing screening machines is an important issue for midwives
- Sera commented that a newer model of her OAE machine costs about \$6,000
- Dante noted that the percentage of newborns who get their hearing screening is very high, so the issue is not an access problem, but more increasing accessibility

General Discussion

- Priya shared that WABC TV had a piece recently covering the CDC report on the mistreatment of birthing people – she recommended this as a resource for the group
 - https://youtu.be/pFoP_xzwXjc?si=hG6okKrwsOKS4Pjg
 - Lucinda shared the CDC report: <https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/respectful-maternity-care/index.html#:~:text=Twenty%20percent%20of%20those%20surveyed,of%20multiracial%20women%20reported%20mistreatment>

Discussion of registering home births and getting birth certificates

- Carolyn and several other members shared difficulties getting a notarized birth certificate with home births, since birth certificates are filled in the town where the birth took place, and often times the process with the town clerk (an elected official) is challenging
- Dante said that she has raised the issue of birth certificates to the legal team at DPH, and mentioned that DPH is working to align the regulations with statute with regards to vital records
- Dante is interested in how homebirth midwives deal with birth certificates/vital records in other states
 - Carolyn said that all midwives could register a birth online through the state
 - Sera shared that in Massachusetts and Pennsylvania have similar processes to CT in her experience
- Christy expressed that it would be easier if all midwives could do it how licensed midwives do it, but still thinks that it is a complicated process

Future Topics/Continuing Discussion: Sera asked the group about future topics or potential guests to come and speak with

- Christy brought up the discussion of getting lab referrals/easier access to labs
 - Christy does her labs through lab core, and they must be picked up in limited hours – for something like preeclampsia labs she waits for a day and a half; having access to private labs that were open 24 hours a day would improve the practice of midwifery
 - She believes this would save money and hospital resources
 - Michelle expressed that in her experience, if their patients have a condition they are worried about, they must send their patients to triage, they don't have an alternative
- Lucinda suggested a meeting focusing on information on midwives starting their own reproductive health/birthing center or starting a home delivery center, especially with a health equity lens
 - She expressed interest in delving into racial disparities in Connecticut, especially as a Black woman who is interested in starting her own practice, she would love to connect with more resources
- Priya asked if Lucinda had connected with the Neighborhood Birth Center in Massachusetts
 - Dante thought that Nashira Baril could be a good speaker for the group
 - <https://neighborhoodbirthcenter.org/>
- Carolyn expressed that she is going back to school to get certified as a nurse-midwife; she expressed frustration because she is interested in starting a birthing center, but she would be unable to work in it in CT without a nursing degree
- The group referenced Jennie Joseph and the JJ Way in Florida as a great resource with very good outcomes
 - <https://commonsensechildbirth.org/the-jj-way/>

Closing

- Sera thanked everyone for being here and adjourned the meeting at 3:58pm