

Midwifery Working Group

November 22, 2024 | 9:00-10:00am

Meeting Minutes

Members present: Kara Crawford, SciHonor Devotion, Sera Gadbois, Carolyn Greenfield., Sam Haun, Priya Morganstern, Christina Mukon, Selina Osei, Gengi Proteau, Amy Romano, Michelle Telfer.

Members absent: Lucinda Canty, Christy D'Aquila, Camille Grant, Daileann Hemmings, Shayna LaFlam., Kim Sandor, Kathrine Villeda, Fatmata Williams.

DPH: Melia Allan, Dante Costa.

Introduction

- Sera called the meeting to order at 9:03am
- Priya Morganstern motioned to approve the October meeting minutes; Sam Haun seconded.
 - Dante mentioned that the presenter Joyce from last time would share transfer protocols/information. Sera shared that she believes this is public information and will look to distribute this to the group.
 - The minutes passed without discussion.

Presentation and Q&A on RI Training Initiative, Quatia, Director of Urban Perinatal Education Center

Presentation

- Quatia Osorio, BSc, BS-HSM, SPM spoke about the community midwifery equity initiative, founded by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).
- Quatia spoke about the history of midwifery in Rhode Island, and the work that this initiative is doing under the five-year grant.
- She spoke about their Equity Initiative Goals: increase licensed midwifery and increase accessibility.
- She shared that cohort 2 applications are open through May 1, with a decision on May 15 and placement on June 1. This is open to Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut.
- For more information, visit: www.rhodeislandmidwives.com

Q&A

- Dante Costa asked about the work to increase Medicaid reimbursement and asked for an update.
 - Quatia co-authored the RI doula reimbursement bill and is working to do something similar for midwifery.
 - Licensed midwifery has been in existence since ~2014. The cohort of midwives in RI is speaking to government as practitioners and looking at providing a cost saving analysis. Their strategy right now is building out the coalition of midwives.

- RI midwives are working with their executive office of health and human services, asking to be removed from global billing, because it does not fit with the midwifery model of care, instead they are asking for a fee for service.
 - They are also asking for limited prescriptive authority.
- Quatia expressed that building a birth center without a pipeline or significant overhead does not make sense. Instead, she expressed the need to train a homebirth midwife population in the state first.
- Sera asked Quatia to elaborate on communications enhancement.
 - Quatia shared that RI has a midwifery council, which just got its first CPM.
 - She expressed that there is a lot of misinformation going around, especially on key issues such as hospital transfers. For example, one nurse midwife working in a hospital did not know that midwives have transfer paperwork.
 - The coalition is working on explaining to professionals outside of the midwifery community how midwives are trained, in order to educate the broader population about the training that they have, to earn respect and dignity for both midwives and the families they care for.
- The group spoke about the impracticality of building birth centers in the current environment, given the high cost of building and maintaining a facility, and the need to pull practicing midwives in the community to staff a center, since the workforce of midwives is relatively small.
 - Quatia spoke about the importance of building a maternity hub, rather than a birth center.
- Amy Romano spoke about her training/drill initiative, stepuptogether.com which she has spoken to the working group before, and expressed interest in connecting with Quatia on this.
 - Amy shared a community birth transfer resource kit that she and other community midwives worked on: <https://saferbirth.org/community-birth-transfer-resource-kit/>
- Quatia emphasized the importance of having community members on any quality collaborative, to hold hospitals/people in power accountable.
- The group discussed the landscape for birth centers in Connecticut, and specifically the role for CPMs in the state.
- Dr. Selina Osei shared that the Connecticut PQC had a state of the state conference at CHA last Friday, and is undertaking a survey to explore QI projects that participants are interested in. She will connect with Melia and Dante on this issue.

Discuss Annual Report

- Dante Costa shared that the midwifery working group must submit an annual report. This report comes from the group and is not owned by DPH. She asked how the group wanted to handle the report, including any recommendations that they have.
- Sera expressed that she views the working group meetings as monthly brainstorming sessions with some of the best brains in the maternal health world and expressed support for continuing the group as a forum for conversation. Several members agreed.
- SciHonor Devotion shared that she would like the focus of the group to remain on community midwifery and everything related to it.
- Christina Mukon shared that she would be interested in summarizing the discussions had by the group in 2024, but in 2025, she would be interested in having representation from providers

outside of the midwifery community (such as OBs or MFMs), to start the education and dialogue with other professions.

- Gengi shared that it may be useful to get people like pediatricians and hospital administrators, to get a better sense of what it is like from their perspective. She shared that potentially inviting other professions to even one meeting, rather than every single month, to motivate them to come and share perspectives.
- Dante will work to pull together a summary report to share with the group.

Closing

- The next meeting is currently scheduled for December 27, 2024, but Sera recommended that the group skips the December meeting.
- The group expressed interest in having Joyce Kimball and Rebecca Herman from Massachusetts at a meeting together to learn more about the landscape there.
- The meeting adjourned at 10:09am.