

# Symposium on Implicit Bias and Racial Disparities in Obstetrical Care

Promising Practices & Recommendations

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# Symposium on Implicit Bias and Racial Disparities in Obstetrical Care

- November 1, 2018
- Convened at the request of Governor Cuomo
- Included 50 multidisciplinary healthcare providers and stakeholders from across New York State
- Co-hosted by ACOG DII, HANYS, GNYHA
- **Goal: to identify concrete strategies to reduce racial disparities and their negative health impacts, with a direct emphasis on the hospital setting.**

# Conduct Implicit Bias Trainings in Healthcare

*“They look at your skin color and your pocket and judge you based on that.”—Listening Session Participant*

## Promising Practice Example

- Mount Sinai Health System: partnered with Cook Ross to employ a train-the-trainer model of unconscious bias training
- Designated team received training off-site, and returned to offer training to multidisciplinary teams

## Recommendations from Symposium Participants

- Deploy a state funded pilot project for hospitals to conduct multidisciplinary implicit bias training
- Enhance medical school, nursing school, midwifery school, and residency training program curricula on implicit bias

# Enhance Hospital and Community Partnerships, Support, & Trust

*“We used to have a village and today it’s gone.” -Listening Session Participant*

## Promising Practice Example

- Northwell Health System: Piloting the [AIM Reduction of Peripartum Racial/Ethnic Disparities bundle](#)
- First efforts include building partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs) to engage women in defining equity at the hospital system, prioritize strategies, and enhance community trust

## Recommendations from Symposium Participants

- Develop partnerships/collaborations among healthcare institutions and CBOs to define equitable care and prioritize interventions
- Make it a strategic priority to diversify the healthcare system workforce

# Improve Communication and Cultural Competency Training

*“I was never told why I was high risk.” -Listening Session Participant*

## Promising Practice Example

- Dr. Angela Wright Marshall: presented a cohesive framework for providers to promote cultural competency and compassion: listen more, show more empathy, avoid assumptions, “gut check” any generalizations, understand wide variations between cultures, and commit to explaining more

## Recommendations from Symposium Participants

- Implement cultural competency education across the entire healthcare team, understanding the historical context of mistrust in various communities
- Enhance medical school, residency training, midwifery, and nursing program curricula on respectful, trauma-informed communication techniques and listening exercises
- Increase the diversity of medical, midwifery, and nursing students in training, and other healthcare providers in the workforce

# Initiate a Multi-pronged Approach to Address System Issues

*“You never really see your doctors.” – Listening Session Participant*

*“...you’re just on your own.” –Listening Session Participant*

## Promising Practice Examples

- Mount Sinai: Educating frontline staff on how to collect consistent and meaningful REAL (Race, Ethnicity, and Language) data, and why it is being collected
- Women in the Listening Sessions reported consistently positive experiences with community health workers, along with home visiting programs, and a desire for expansion of these services

# Initiate a Multi-pronged Approach to Address System Issues

## Recommendations from Symposium Participants

- Establish a statewide maternal mortality review board
- Invest in data infrastructure to enhance surveillance of racial disparities and better identify gaps in care
- Identify opportunities to optimize postpartum care, with a corresponding reimbursement system that recognizes postpartum care as a patient-centered, ongoing process
- Increase Medicaid coverage to one-year postpartum and develop policies to increase provider/facility acceptance of Medicaid to help expand access to care in this population
- Increase accessibility by patients to their medical records, and pursue secure sharing of medical records seamlessly between facilities to improve continuity of care

# In Summary

- Health disparities based on race/ethnicity are a critically important issue in maternal health
- Additional provider education and organizational based solutions are required
- Development and promotion of workforce wellness initiatives may be an important investment to improve patient care
- **Ultimately, a combination of strategies is necessary as women from all racial and ethnic backgrounds deserve compassionate, equitable obstetric care**

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