

# UNIQUE BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY-BASED CARE

## *Stories from CBO Leaders*

A group of leaders from Black-serving community-based organizations (CBOs) in L.A. County shared their experiences providing community-based care to Black birthers in their prenatal, delivery, and postpartum stages. They provided one or more of the following: funding, doula & midwifery care, birthing classes, lactation coaching, group therapy, and online social media support. Here's what they had to say:

### GOALS

#### *"reimagine Black motherhood"*

In the U.S., Black women disproportionately suffer from higher rates of poor health outcomes and maternal mortality due to sociocultural factors, such as structural racism and sexism. In response to this crisis, Black-serving community-based organizations prioritize improving Black maternal and infant health outcomes. Aside from putting Black women's health at the forefront, CBOs elevate the experiences of Black birthers and their families by building relationships of trust and providing **community-centered, culturally-competent care**.

### MATERNAL HEALTH IS...



ensuring all women and birthing people have access to the highest quality of care



promoting self care and rest throughout pregnancy and beyond



raising babies and children in a safe and healthy environment with dignity



having full autonomy over their body and their choices

### KEY FINDINGS

- Sociocultural factors result in higher maternal mortality rates among Black women in the U.S.
- The goal of community-based organizations is to reduce poor maternal and infant health outcomes.
- Community-based care supplements the emotion-deficient nature of clinical care by implementing a cultural lens, advocating for birthers, and building relationships of trust and safe spaces.
- The strength of community-based care lies in the shared experiences of workers and birthers in health care and society.
- Recommendations include increasing funds for capacity building, training, and programming; addressing burnout and compassion fatigue; and ensuring living wage.

## COMMUNITY-BASED CARE AND CLINICAL CARE

In clinical settings, the fast-paced environment often makes people feel that health professionals are "trying to get people in and out." Clinicians lack "the time to sit with each and every parent and really be diligent about putting that time in." Community-based care puts an emphasis on the social aspect of care. There's a conscious decision to make sure a cultural lens is implemented. It seeks to provide continuous support to Black birthers and their families.

*"We're there in the community. We're not really going anywhere. We're able to provide consistent care over and over and over again."*

### STRENGTHS OF CBOs

Has staff with shared experience that translates to more connection and competency

Address structural violence that is specific to the Black community

Has working boards consisting of Black people leading efforts to reduce disparities

Prioritizes building community and relationships of trust with birthers

Picks up where agencies and hospitals fail and fall short

Advocates for Black birthers with agencies and hospitals

Implements culturally competent programs and services

Focuses on the experience of clients versus deliverables and numbers

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### FUND CAPACITY BUILDING

Having more staff members increases the capacity to expand work. It will open up the "floodgates for more time to be innovative."

#### FUND TRAININGS AND CERTIFICATIONS

This includes making sure that implicit bias training is mandatory when it comes to perinatal professionals or anyone in the maternal health profession. Professional development courses, like grant writing, may be helpful to fast-track or bolster fundraising efforts.

#### INCREASE PROGRAMMING FUNDS

Online services break down some of the regional barriers to accessing services provided by CBOs. Increase in funds can also allow for at-home visits and community lactation centers

#### ADDRESS BURNOUT AND COMPASSION FATIGUE

Community-based work "is rewarding, but it's definitely exhausting." Wellness programs, like more paid days off or wellness retreats, increase employee retention and decreases employee turnover.

#### ENSURE LIVING WAGE

CBO members wear a lot of hats. Most of the times they have to juggle grant writing and intervention development. Their compensation is inadequate, especially considering the high cost of living in L.A.

### FOR FURTHER INQUIRIES



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