

Meeting Summary for Women & Children's Health Committee

Zoom Meeting

Jun 09, 2025 09:26 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada) ID: 977 1102 4012

Quick recap

The Medical Assistance program oversight Council's Women and Children's Health Subcommittee met to discuss the AIM CCI initiative, which aims to improve maternal health outcomes through postpartum care enhancements and expanded reproductive health services access. Presentations covered the program's implementation across multiple states, including data strategies and community engagement efforts focused on hypertension screening and monitoring, as well as the integration of blood pressure and depression screenings in WIC offices. The conversation ended with discussions about maternal and pediatric screening initiatives, including successful implementations of depression screening in pediatric settings and plans for upcoming web-based sessions on trauma-informed care and maternal mental health.

Next steps

- [Co-Chair Amy Gagliardi to check if a legislative update can be provided at the July 14th meeting.](#)
- [Amy to inquire about getting an update on the P4P \(Pay for Performance\) project integration in Connecticut for the July meeting.](#)
- [Committee members to reach out to Amy Gagliardi with suggestions for topics to be included in the July or September meeting agendas.](#)
- [Steven Colangelo to follow up with the Connecticut Medical Society about the maternal outcomes study he mentioned.](#)
- [Janice Gruendel and Amy Gagliardi to further discuss the accountability project for referrals and service engagement.](#)
- [MAPOC Women and Children's Health Subcommittee to consider inviting AIM CCI representatives for future collaborations or updates.](#)

Summary

Legislative Session Opening Remarks

The meeting began with introductions and informal conversation among attendees. Deidre McDaniel prepared to share her screen for a presentation, and it was noted that the meeting would be covered live by CTN. Representative Keitt expressed confidence in her Co-Chair and had to leave for another meeting. The meeting was set to begin formally with introductions to help presenters familiarize themselves with the audience.

Maternal Health Initiative Overview

The Medical Assistance program oversight Council's Women and Children's Health Subcommittee met to hear presentations about the AIM CCI initiative, a program aimed at improving maternal health outcomes. Dr. Deidre McDaniel, interim senior program manager, introduced the national team behind the initiative, highlighting key members and their roles. The presentation focused on the program's goals of enhancing postpartum care, expanding access to reproductive health services, and addressing maternal mortality gaps in Connecticut.

AIM Portfolio Overview and Impact

Deidre provided an overview of the AIM portfolio, which includes three projects: AIM capacity, AIM TA center, and AIM CCI. She explained that Healthy Start was awarded a 5-year

cooperative agreement to develop and implement non-hospital focused maternal safety bundles. The program is currently in year 6, with a grant ending in September. Deidre highlighted the program's reach across 12 states and 14 communities, with bundles downloaded in 46 states. She described the program's approach, including the use of national and local maternal safety work groups, and emphasized its focus on hypertension as a major contributor to maternal mortality and morbidity.

MCCI Maternal Health Data Progress

Saanie Sully presented an overview of MCCI's data strategy and implementation progress across various maternal health care measures. He highlighted improvements in postpartum care rates, emergency response planning, and maternal early warning signs education, with particular success in postpartum follow-up care coordination reaching an 85% adoption rate. Saanie emphasized that the data collection approach focuses on leveraging existing data points to minimize burden on community organizations, and he detailed progress in hypertension screening and monitoring initiatives, noting that sites are sharing and learning from each other's practices.

Perinatal Care Systems Improvement Program

The meeting focused on a presentation about a program aimed at improving perinatal care systems, with discussions on data collection, community involvement, and resource development. Amy Romano highlighted the importance of including community midwives and emergency medical services providers in these efforts, while Deidre emphasized the broad reach of community care and the value of collaboration with fire departments. Saanie provided a disclosure before answering a question in the chat, unrelated to the program or the association's views.

Medicare Expansion and Postpartum Care

Saanie presented data showing that Medicare expansion can significantly impact the timeliness of postpartum care, with healthcare systems needing to adjust scheduling to accommodate this change. Steven Colangelo mentioned a 10-year-old study from the Connecticut Medical Society that demonstrated similar findings about racial disparities in postpartum care. Amy Gagliardi noted that these findings influenced the development of the OB pay-for-performance program, which continues today, and mentioned ongoing work on a hypertension bundle. Pamela Beaulieu expressed interest in learning more about how the WIC program fits into this context.

WIC Screening Implementation Strategies

The group discussed implementing blood pressure screenings and depression screenings in WIC offices, with Deidre sharing that while there was initial pushback from sites about feasibility, most communities have adapted to the new initiatives. Deidre explained that sites have developed workarounds, such as using video training for blood pressure cuff usage and automatically transferring readings to medical providers, while Saanie highlighted the opportunity to engage the American Academy of Pediatrics on hypertension screening since mothers are more likely to bring children for vaccinations than for well-woman visits.

Maternal and Pediatric Screening Initiatives

The group discussed maternal and pediatric screening initiatives, with Amy Gagliardi sharing Connecticut's success in implementing depression screening in pediatric settings and allowing separate billing. Janice Gruendel highlighted challenges in connecting maternal health data points in real time, particularly regarding hypertension and depression screening outcomes. Rebecca Petersen (DMHAS) announced a 4th annual summer series of web-based sessions on trauma-informed care and maternal mental health through a SAMHSA-funded PPW pilot grant:

[PROUD Trainings | Connecticut Hospital Association](#) and [Training - ACCESS Mental Health for Moms](#) The next meeting was scheduled for July 14th, with Amy inviting suggestions for legislative and P4P project updates to be included on the agenda.

From Amy Romano: www.stepuptogether.com and Direct link to our antepartum Severe Hypertension Drill Kit: <https://stepuptogether.com/resources/severe-range-blood-pressure-in-pregnant-patient/>