Background & Mission:

Black women are 243% more likely to die from pregnancy-related complications than white women in the United States. For the last four years the Black Maternal Health Event Committee led by Dr. Ndidiamaka Amutah-Onukagha has hosted the Black Maternal Health Conference at Tufts University School of Medicine (TUSM).

The annual conference seeks to raise awareness, activism, and community building to bring more attention to the state of Black maternal health in the United States.

The 1st Annual Black Maternal Health Conference took place on Friday, April 13th, 2018 at Tufts University School of Medicine. The event had a total of 286 RSVPs, and 226 attendees. In 2019, we had about 200 conference registrants, and in 2020 the number of registrants increased to almost 300 people. The Black Maternal Health Conference has created a one-of-a-kind space to discuss new innovations and how experts in Black maternal health and health disparities are working to end the adverse maternal health outcomes experienced by Black Women in the United States.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, our 2020 conference was moved to a virtual space with 150 attendees. In 2021, we held a virtual conference titled, “Centering the Role of Doulas in Addressing Maternal Health Disparities” with 1,479 registrants.

Our 5th annual conference being held in 2022 is titled, “The Role of Policy in Addressing Black Maternal Health Disparities.” Our attendees come from various backgrounds ranging from academia, the health care field, and non-profits both in the Greater Boston area and across the country. This year, due to our virtual platform, we anticipate attendees from all corners of the world.
Policy reform, expansion, and implementation are desperately needed in the maternal health field. There have already been major strides made in the policy field. In 2021, the Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act was introduced to comprehensively address every dimension of the maternal health crisis in America. Some policy experts and advocates are focusing efforts to encourage state lawmakers to expand Medicaid as a method of reducing maternal mortality. In 2022 we, the Black Maternal Health Planning committee, are organizing a virtual conference to further this conversation. This will give attendees greater opportunity to participate in meaningful and open dialogue with individuals and groups working in the maternal health field while connecting with local and national organizations dedicated to improving Black Maternal Health.

Conference Theme

On April 8th, 2022, we will be holding our 5th Annual Black Maternal Health event in the form of a virtual conference. Given the success of the previous four Black Maternal Health Symposiums, we hope for increased success around the virtual 2022 conference with more attendees, speakers, and opportunities to engage in robust dialogue between individuals and organizations working to address maternal health disparities faced by Black women.

The 2022 conference is titled: The Role of Policy in Addressing Black Maternal Health Disparities

“We have a lot of work still to do, to bring equality to the basic life experiences of those living in this country Black mothers face race-driver systemically-driven hurdles to their well-being and offspring, hurdles that are far less of an issue for white mothers. It’s a matter of life and death, and a vital issue for the growth of this nation.” – 2018 Attendee

“I enjoyed the entire event and I really enjoyed the enthusiasm of the hosts and the speaker

-2020 Attendee

“Thanks again for bringing attention to this public health crisis. I’d definitely suggest a daytime conference...”

- 2019 Attendee

“We need to empower our communities to rise up in advocacy for change to bridge the gap in health disparities in the POC community vs. the white folk”

- 2019 Attendee
Learning Objectives

The 2022 Black Maternal Health Conference aims to bring together members of the community, health care professionals, and students from around the country that are dedicated to ending the adverse maternal health outcomes faced by Black women in the US. The goals of the conference are:

• To identify policy reforms and expansions that will decrease the alarming Black maternal mortality rate

• To understand the role that bias and systematic racism play in causing adverse maternal health outcomes for Black women in the US

• To identify ways health professionals (including physicians, midwives, nurses, doulas and others) can use a more respectful and culturally competent approach in listening and responding to Black women

• To prepare health professionals and students to become advocates for Black women and improving their maternal health outcomes

• To facilitate conversations between health professionals/students on ways to improve Black

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Please respond by March 1st, 2022 for your organization to be included in promotional materials. You may contact Dr. Amutah-Onukagha (ndidiamake.amutah_onukagha@tufts.edu) or bmm@tufts.edu with any questions.
EVENT CHAIRS

Ndidiamaka Amutah-Onukagha, PhD, MPH, CHES
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Dr. Amutah-Onukagha is the Julia A. Okoro Professor for Black Maternal Health, and the Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Department of Public Health and Community Medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine. Her current research interests include health disparities, reproductive health, maternal and infant mortality and HIV/AIDS in Black women. Ndidiamaka is a member of the American Public Health Association and is currently the co-chair of the Perinatal and Women's Health committee in the Maternal and Child Health section. Ndidiamaka is the Principal Investigator of two multi-year studies on maternal mortality and morbidity, an R01 funded by NIH and an interdisciplinary grant funded by RWJ. Additionally, she is a member of the MA-COVID 19 Maternal Equity Coalition and was honored with the APHA MCH Section’s Young Professional of the Year Award in 2019. She is also in the 2020-2021 class of the top 40 under 40 Minority Leaders in Healthcare, an annual award given out the National Minority Quality Forum. Finally, Dr. Amutah-Onukagha is the Founder and Director of the Maternal Outcomes for Translational Health Equity Research Lab, (MOTHER) a research lab comprised of 35 students from undergrad to postdoc with a keen interest in reducing maternal health disparities as experienced by Black women. Dr. Amutah-Onukagha is the mother of two beautiful black sons and lives in MA with her husband and family.

Judith Jeanty, MPH
Contact: Judith.Jeanty@tufts.edu

Judith Jeanty, MPH, is from New Jersey where she received her Bachelor of Science from Montclair State University and her Master's in Public Health with a concentration in Community Health and Prevention from Drexel University. She was previously a program management officer at the New Jersey Department of Health where she managed statewide doula funded programs. Her research interests include Maternal and Child Health, health disparities and reproductive health specifically amongst Black women and low-income communities. She is passionate about increasing access to doula services and achieving health equity. She is the project manager for the Be a Mom R01 study working directly under Dr. Ndidiamaka Amutah-Onukagha.
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Thank you for supporting the Black Maternal Health Conference!