



UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND  
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SCHOOL OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH

# Examining Contributors to Black Maternal Health Experiences in Prince George's County, Maryland

**Team Black Mamas Matter:** Isabella Battish<sup>1</sup>, Aden Eskinder<sup>1</sup>, Stephanie Fishkin<sup>1</sup>, Madison Harris<sup>1</sup>,  
Tam Nguyen<sup>1</sup>, Alexis Nnabue<sup>1</sup>, Christal Onyekwere<sup>1</sup>, Esohe Owie<sup>1</sup>, and Sidney Redwood<sup>1</sup>

**Faculty Advisor:** Dr. Sylvette La Touche-Howard<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Maryland, Gemstone Honors Program

<sup>2</sup>University of Maryland, School of Public Health



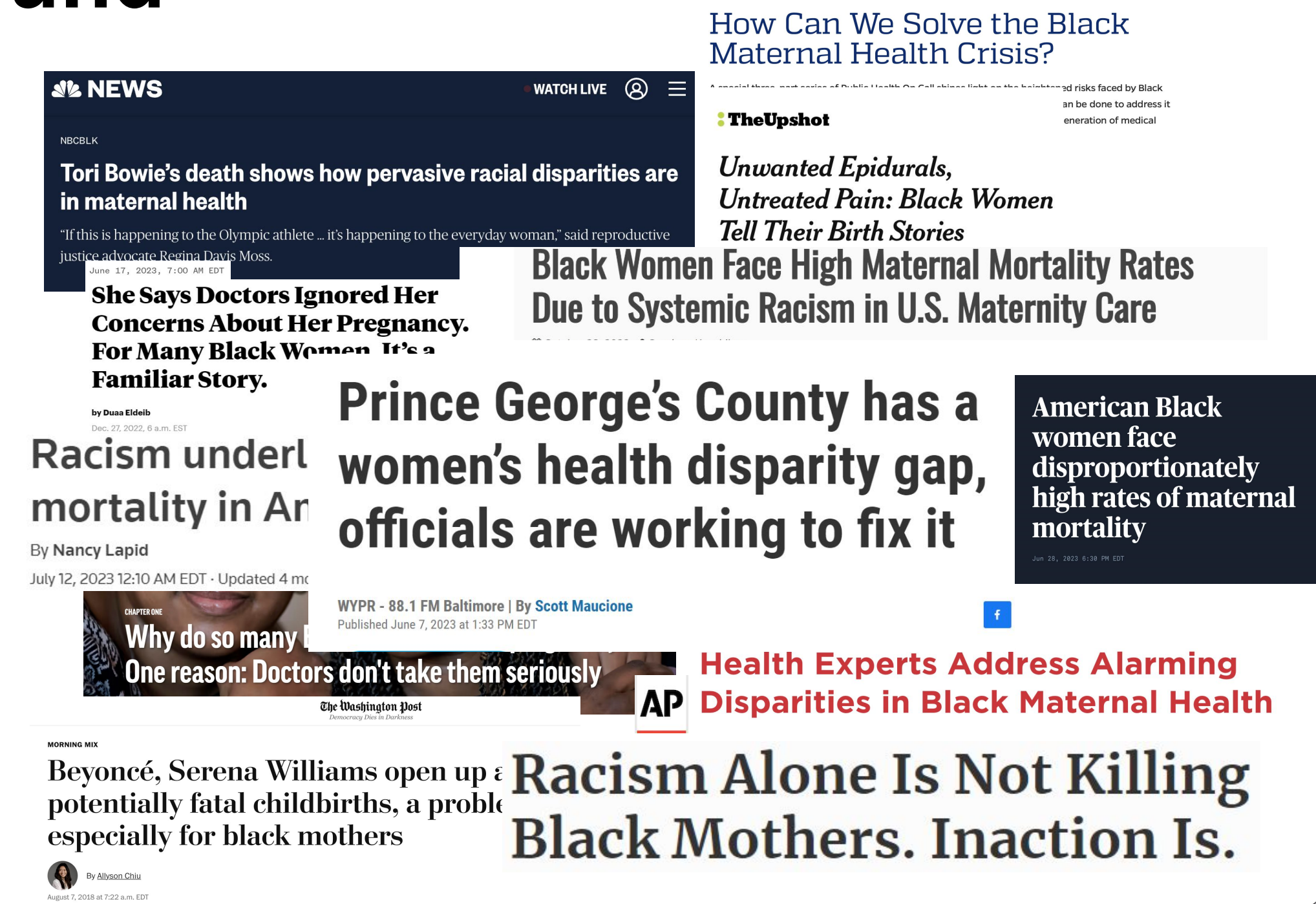
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## Background

In the United States, Black women have a maternal mortality rate three times that of white women, a trend reflected in Prince George's County, MD, one of the wealthiest majority-Black counties in the country.<sup>1</sup>

Implicit bias among health providers has been found to exacerbate these disparities. Medical schools lack standardized cultural humility and implicit bias training, despite demands from students and providers.<sup>2</sup>

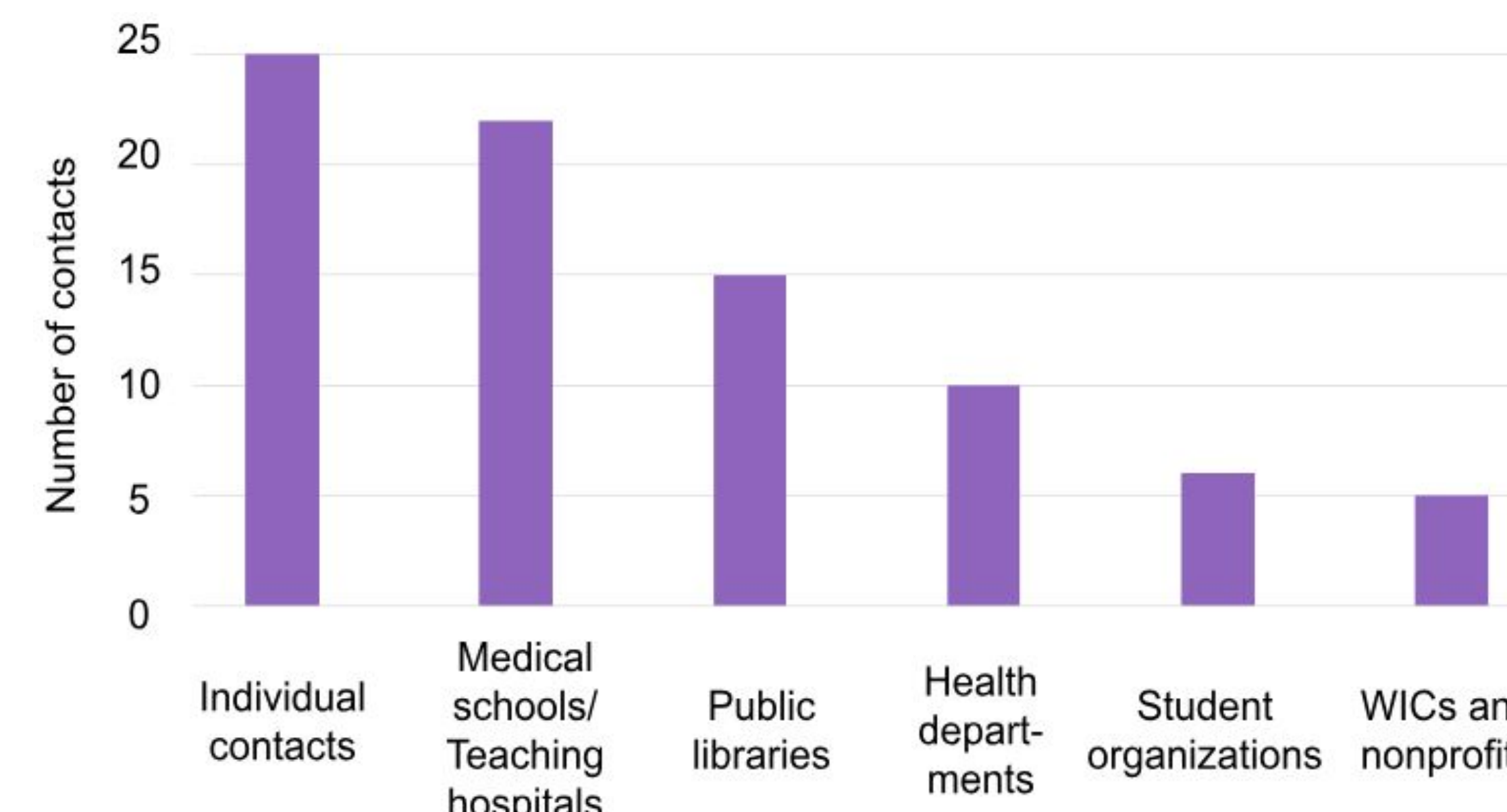
This project seeks to understand how **access to healthcare** and **medical school curricula** contribute to maternal health disparities and how **medical school curricula** can be strengthened to improve Black maternal health outcomes.



## Outreach and Preliminary Responses

### Building a Coalition

80+ individuals and organizations have joined our team to address this health crisis.



### Themes from Interviews with Public Health and Medical Professionals

**Trust-building** between mothers and clinicians

- Shared decision-making
- Listening to patients
- Patient-centered care
- Recognizing structural barriers

**Ongoing work** to improve implicit bias education

- Increasing emphasis on social determinants of health
- Social justice
- Patient-centered care

**Unmet needs** beyond pregnancy care

- Postpartum & mental health care
- Clinicians lack resources to address non-clinical needs (e.g. basic needs, insurance)

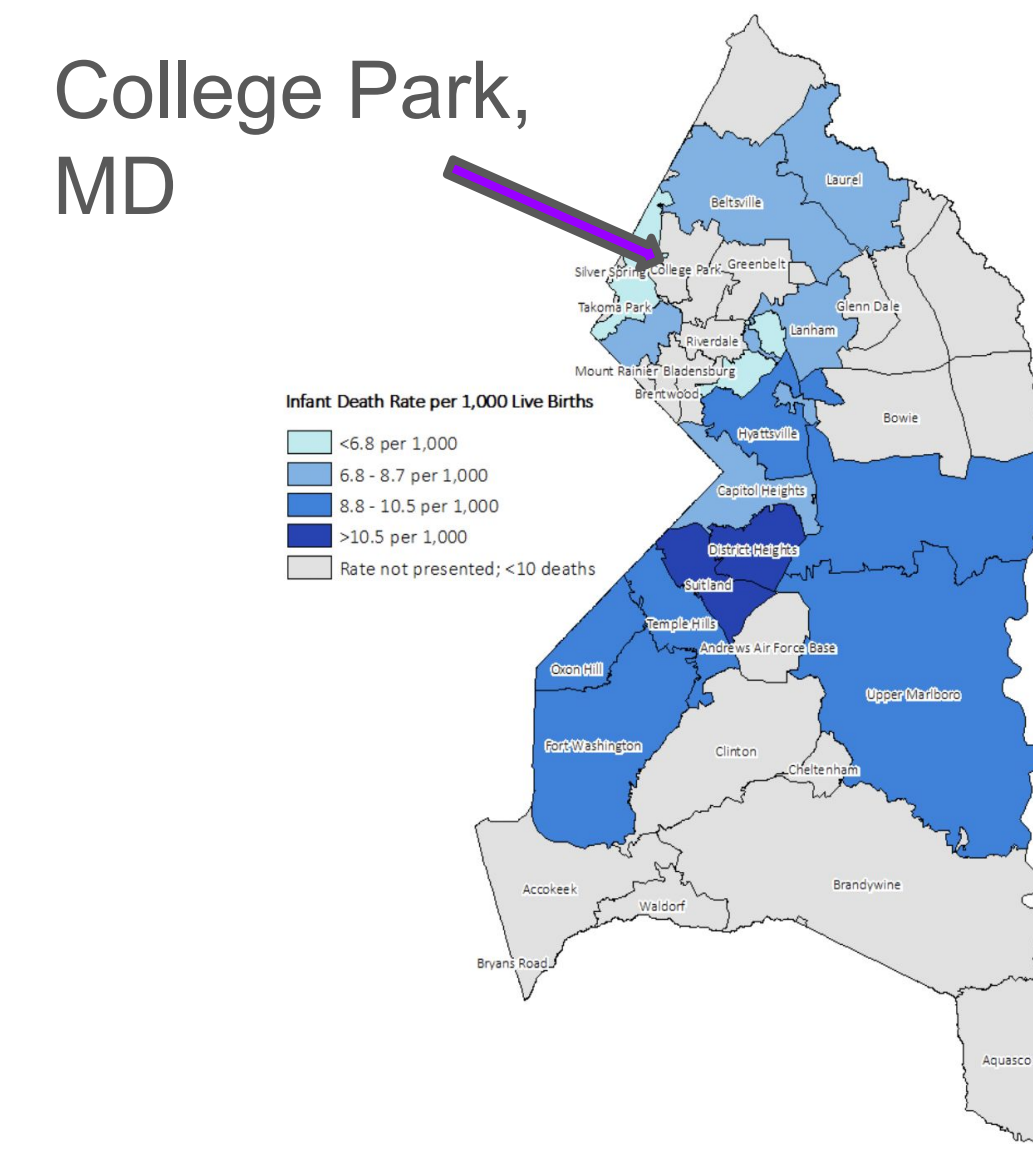
## Research Questions

- What are the primary barriers Black mothers in Prince George's County face when seeking maternal healthcare?
- How does implicit bias and cultural competency training in medical school shape patient-provider interactions?

## Methods

- Surveys and qualitative interviews
- Recruiting in public spaces (e.g. grocery stores, libraries) and in healthcare settings (e.g. teaching hospitals, clinics)
- Inclusion criteria:
  - Black mothers ages 25-34 in Prince George's County, Maryland
  - OB-GYNs and medical students in the DMV area
- Interested participants to be entered into raffle to win \$25!

### Infant Mortality by Zip Code in Prince George's County, 2015-2017.



Infant mortality rates are highest in District Heights and Suitland (dark blue). Areas in gray, including College Park, experience <10 deaths/1,000 live births. Adapted from Prince George's County Health Department, 2019.

## Sample Questions



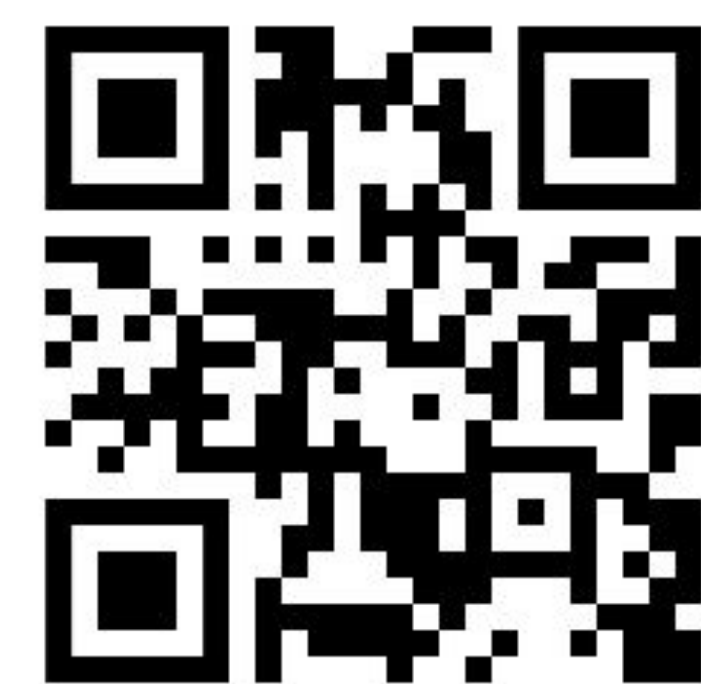
Please express the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
There are personal barriers preventing me from obtaining healthcare services and/or information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to overcome barriers, if any, preventing me from obtaining healthcare services and information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

For the purpose of this survey, we follow the [American Academy of Family Physicians'](#) definition of cultural humility: "having a humble and respectful attitude toward people of other cultures."

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Cultural humility training should be incorporated into medical school education.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I received adequate cultural humility training during my time in medical school to provide safe and respectful care for my patient population.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



To learn more about our research or check your eligibility to participate, please scan this QR code!

<https://linktr.ee/gemsteambmm>  
IRB package #2078743



## Future Directions of Research

**Trust-building** between mothers and clinicians

- How well do mothers and clinicians' perceptions of visits align?
- How do clinicians (de)legitimize mothers' voices during visits?

**Ongoing work** to improve implicit bias education

- Can self monitoring improve physicians' awareness of implicit biases? How can implicit bias otherwise be self-assessed?

**Unmet needs** beyond pregnancy care

- What current resource gaps exist in postpartum care?
- How can policies address mothers' nonclinical needs?

## Selected References

1. Office of Assessment and Planning, Prince George's County Health Department. (2019). *2019 maternal and infant health report*. <https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/Archive/ViewFile/Item/3107>
2. Rule, A. R. L., Reynolds, K., Sucharew, H., & B. Volck. (2018). Perceived cultural competency skills and deficiencies among pediatric residents and faculty at a large teaching hospital. *Hospital Pediatrics*, 8(9), 554-569. <https://doi.org/10.1542/hpeds.2017-0110>

## Acknowledgements

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