



The Bureau of Health Equity Webinar Series

Women's Health



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
Division of Public Health



*Partnership for
Healthy Communities*
A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVE





Erin Ridout

ChristianaCare

Meet the Speaker

Erin Ridout works in ChristianaCare's Community Health Impact Department, supporting health equity and community health initiatives within Women's Health. Prior to working at ChristianaCare, Erin led the Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence (DCADV)'s public health response to domestic violence. Erin has also worked as a social worker in the fields of domestic violence, therapeutic services, and child welfare. Additionally, she serves on the Coordinating Council for the Community Health Workers Association of Delaware (CHWAD), chairing the Advocacy Committee's efforts for CHW certification and sustainable funding.

Our Agenda

What is Women's Health?

The Health Gap

Conditions that affect the Lifespan

Conditions that affect the Health Span

Systemic Inequities

Working Towards Equity

Moving Forward Together



We must look beyond female anatomy and reproductive health to uncover and rectify the impact of centuries of navigating a healthcare system that wasn't built for us.

-Tecco & Cheek, 2022

Women's Health



A comprehensive term used to describe the health & well-being of women across their life course, encompassing reproductive health, conditions unique to women and conditions that impact women differently or disproportionately





Women live 25% more of their lives in poor health when compared to men.

Drivers of the Health Gap

Treatment efficacy

Care delivery

Data

Funding

In collaboration with the
McKinsey Health Institute

Blueprint to Close the Women's Health Gap: How to Improve Lives and Economies for All

INSIGHT REPORT

JANUARY 2025

Treatment Efficacy

Women are more likely to face disadvantages for interventions due to: Lack of access, Lower effectiveness, or Both

Examples

Use of an inhaler for acute asthma exacerbations is **20% less effective** in reducing exacerbations in women than in men

Despite identical technical success of cardiac intervention, women's **risk of death** of cardiac events was **20% higher** than for men

Care Delivery

Awareness & Prevention

Accessibility & Affordability of Care

Timely Diagnosis

Choice of Treatment

HEALTH
LITERACY

Health Literacy



The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand the basic health information and services they need to make appropriate health decisions



Data

Lack of consistent and aligned **definitions and measurement scales** for conditions and symptoms affecting women

Lack of epidemiological and clinical data: in the US **4% of healthcare-related R&D efforts** are targeted specifically women's health issues

1 in 4 clinical trials in the US include sex-disaggregated data

Selected metrics for analysis can be **inherently biased**



Funding

11%

National Institutes of Health (NIH) budget for women's-health-specific research overall

50%

Women have a 50% higher mortality rate in the year following a heart attack

4.5%

The percentage of NIH's budget for coronary artery disease that supports women-focused research

Conditions That Affect Lifespan

Ischemic Heart Disease

Cervical Cancer

Breast Cancer

Maternal Hypertensive Disorders



Ischemic Heart Disease

Leading cause of mortality for all women

Women are more likely to die from acute cardiovascular events

Women have a **20% increased risk** of developing heart failure or dying within 5 years of their first severe heart attack



20%

Cervical Cancer

Second leading cause of cancer death in **women aged 20–39 years**

One of the most successfully **treatable** cancers & **largely preventable**

Incidence and **mortality has declined** by over 50% in last 40 years

Disparities

Uninsured

No high school diploma

American Indian / Alaska Native, Asian, or Hispanic descent



Breast Cancer

Most common cancer diagnosed in women

Delaware leads the United States (US) in the incidence of **late-stage BC** among women under age 50

Delaware leads the US in the incidence of **triple-negative BC (TNBC)**

TNBC **disproportionately impacts** Black women

Maternal Hypertensive Disorders

High blood pressure related disorders
(i.e. Preeclampsia)

Leading causes of pregnancy-related complications and fatalities

Risk factor for chronic cardiovascular disease, stroke, atherosclerosis and chronic hypertension **later in life**



Conditions That Affect Health Span

Menopause and Perimenopause

Premenstrual Syndrome

Chronic Pain Conditions

Endometriosis



Menopause and Perimenopause



Normal transition that **can profoundly impact health** and quality of life

Can last for more than a decade

Distinct lack of research

Untreated symptoms can **increase risk of chronic conditions** (CV disease, depression, dementia, osteoporosis, type 2 diabetes mellitus)

About **90% of women seek medical care** for perimenopause symptoms

Premenstrual Syndrome

Wide-reaching effect on women's health

ACOG recommends menstruation should be treated as a **vital sign**

3 in 4 women experience symptoms

Under researched

Premenstrual Dysphoric Disorder (PMDD)

More severe; **impacts 5%** of menstruating women



Chronic Pain Conditions

Women are **more likely to experience chronic pain** conditions than men:

Migraine, musculoskeletal pain, fibromyalgia, rheumatoid arthritis, IBS

Migraines are **3-4x more frequent** in women than men

Women are more likely to face challenges in having their pain **recognized and taken seriously** by health-providers

Endometriosis

Estrogen-related condition that can cause chronic pain and infertility

Affects **more than 11%** of US women

Fewer than half with endometriosis have a documented diagnosis

Associated with **higher rates of depression**



Systemic Inequities

Domestic Violence

Maternal Mortality & Morbidity

Transgender Healthcare



Domestic Violence



Over 1 in 3 women in the US have experienced rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner



Leading cause of female homicides and injury-related deaths during pregnancy



Significant impact on health

2x as likely to experience **depression**

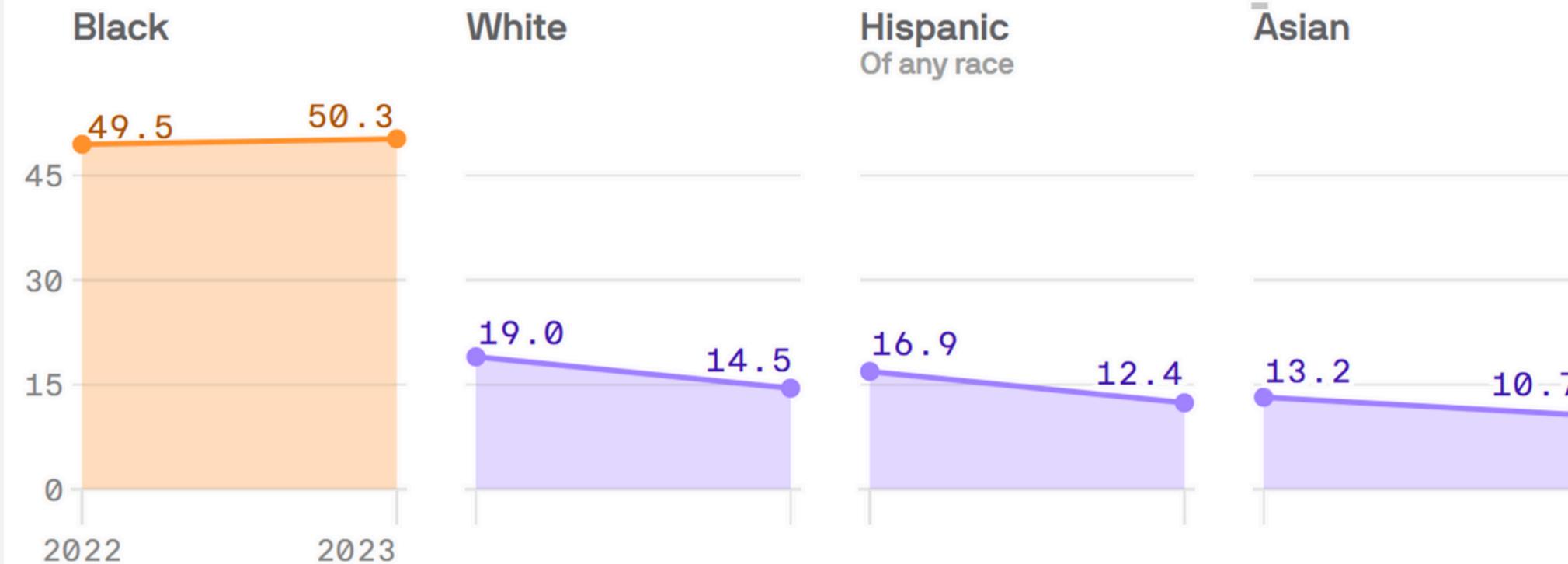
16% more likely to have a **low birth-weight baby**

More likely to experience **chronic conditions**

Black Maternal Mortality & Morbidity

U.S. maternal mortality rates by race and ethnicity, 2022-2023

Deaths per 100k live births

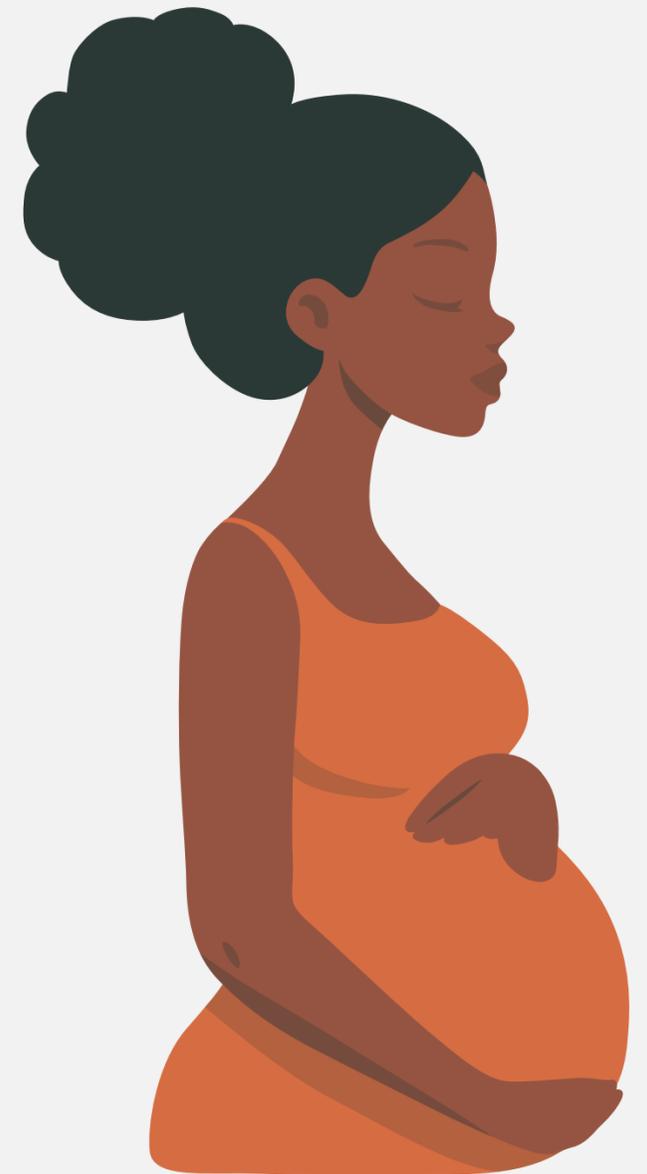


Data: CDC; Chart: Erin Davis/Axios Visuals

Black Maternal Mortality & Morbidity

Severe Maternal Morbidity: Unexpected outcomes of labor and delivery that result in significant short- or long-term consequences to a woman's health

Non-Hispanic Black mothers are more than **twice as likely** as non-Hispanic white mothers to experience severe maternal morbidity



Transgender Healthcare



Transgender men, transmasculine people, and non-binary individuals assigned female at birth require **similar reproductive care** as cisgender women

Very **underrepresented** in data, research, and policies related to equitable care and access

High levels of **discrimination and bias** → delaying or avoiding care due to fear

Working Toward Equity



“Women’s health equity refers to the equitable achievement of optimal health outcomes for all women, irrespective of gender, socioeconomic status, race, geographic location, or other social determinants of health.”

–Bao & Wang, 2025

Promoting Equity

Count Women

Study Women

Care for Women

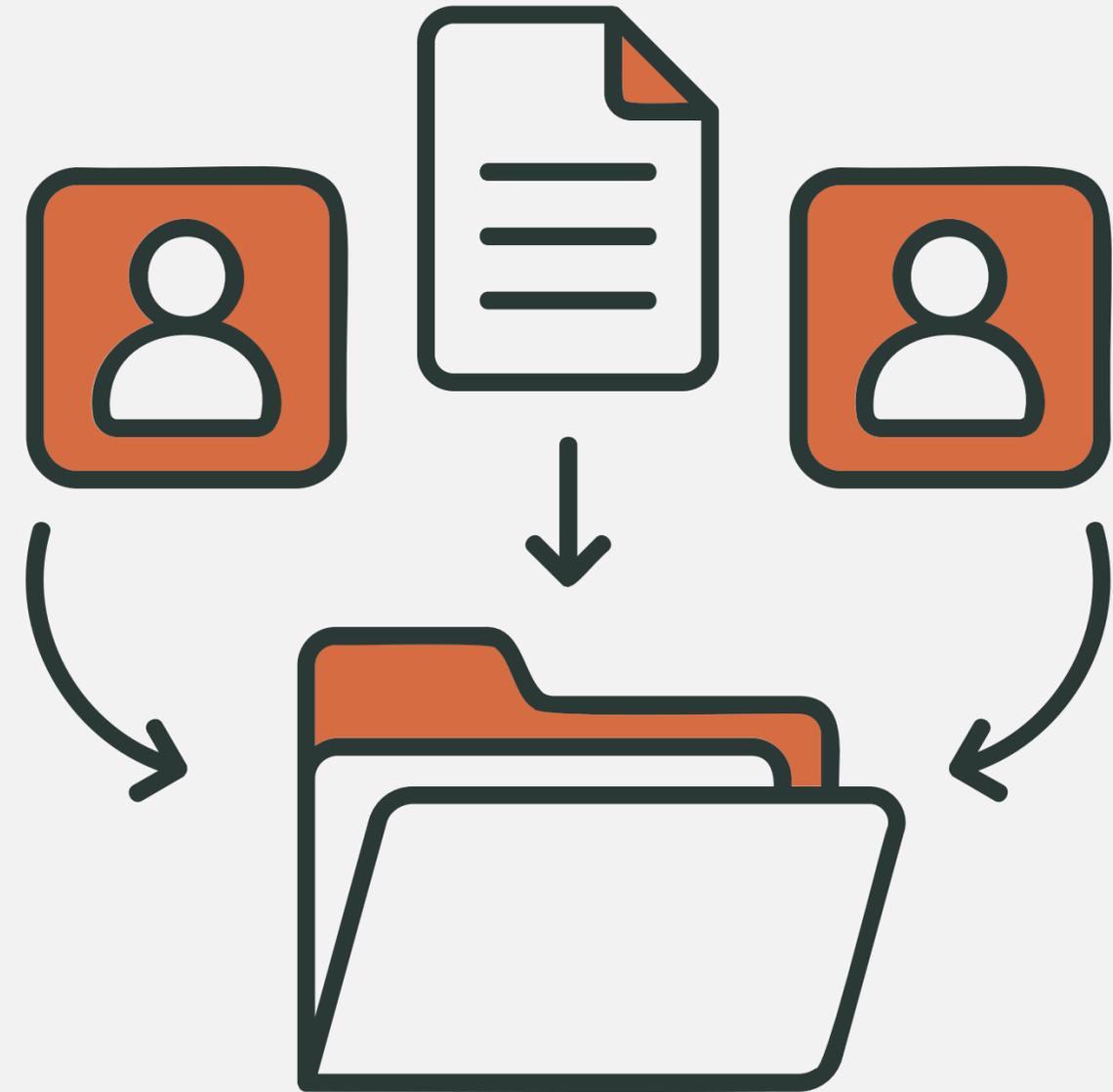
Include ALL Women

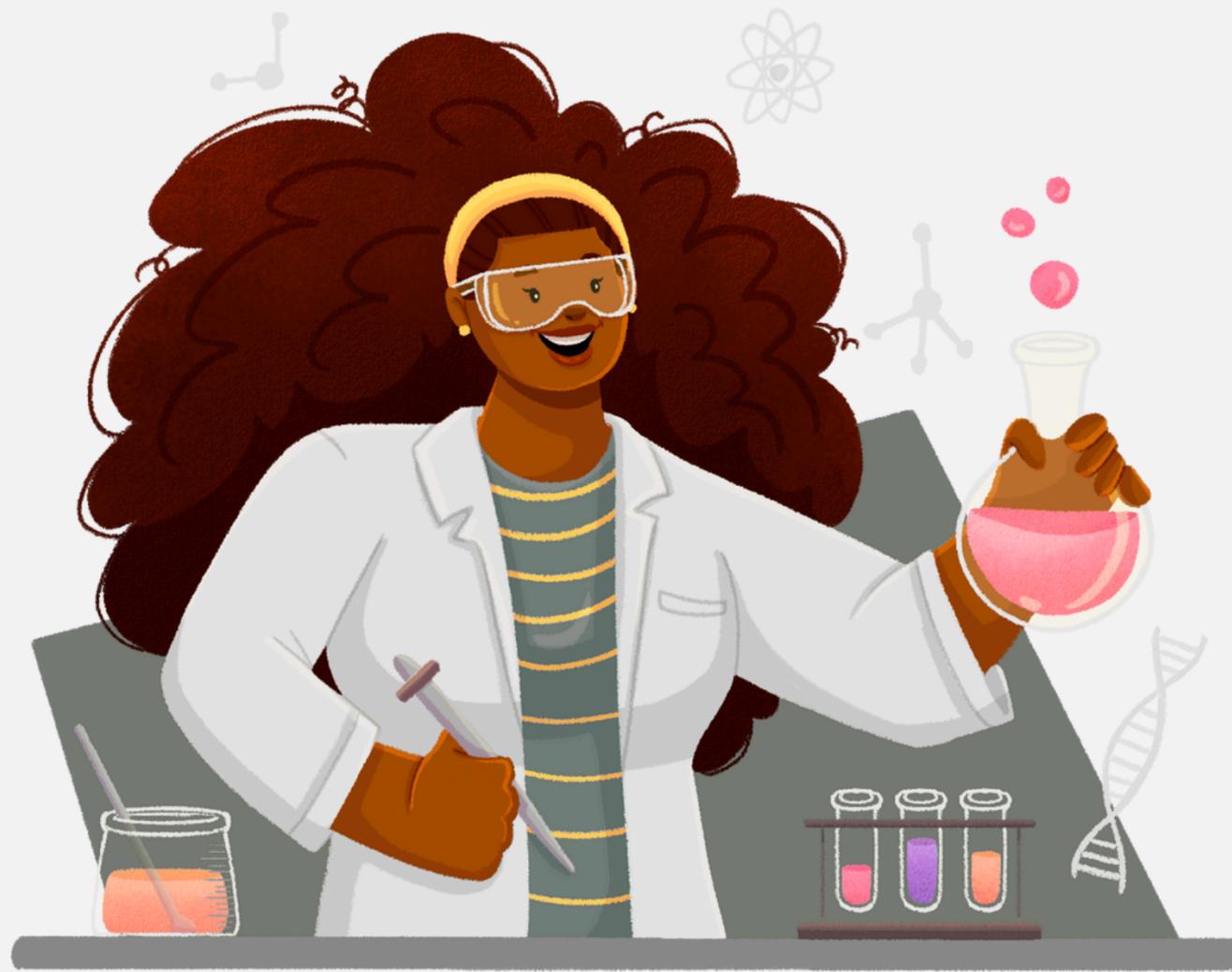
Invest in Women



Count Women

Improve data collection methodologies and **set standards** for sex- and gender-based data collection to increase the understanding of women's health





Study Women

Conduct **research into women's health** and the drivers of sex-based differences, undertake **sex-disaggregated analyses**, and support basic science and research that focuses on **conditions specific to women** across their lifespans

Care for Women

Adopt clinical **practice guidelines** that align with the accepted evidence for sex- and gender-based care, and **enhance clinical education and the care delivery systems** needed to effectively implement them



Include ALL Women

Invest in research, clinical education, training and care delivery,
with a lens on **health equity and inclusion**



Invest in Women

Funnel resources towards women's health:
research, care delivery,
education, employment,
upstream prevention
(social drivers of health)



Women's Health Equity in Delaware

Doula Organizations

Domestic Violence – CHW Program

CHW Breast Cancer Screening
Program

Guaranteed Basic Income Pilot
Program



Delaware Doulas

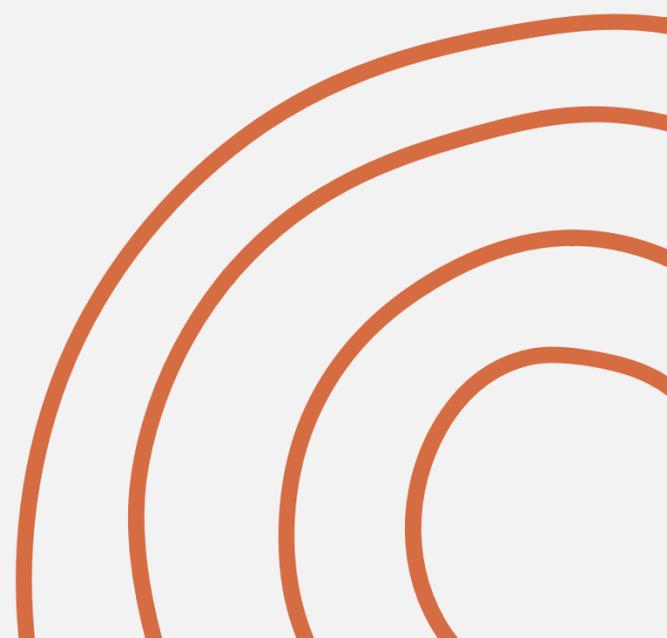
HB 80 (2023): Requires doula services be covered by Medicaid in DE

Black Mothers in Power – www.blackmothersinpower.org

Concrete Rose Holistic – www.concreteroseholistic.com

Delaware's Black Reproductive Justice Coalition – www.deblackdoulas.org

Do Care Doula Foundation – www.dedoulas.com



Domestic Violence – CHW Program

Dual domestic violence
advocacy & **Community Health
Worker** model

Meets survivors wherever they
feel **safe & comfortable**

Addresses survivors' **complex
safety, health, and social** needs

If you or someone you know is in
an unsafe or unhealthy
relationship, local
Community Health Advocates
are available to help.

To connect with a
Community Health Advocate
please call:

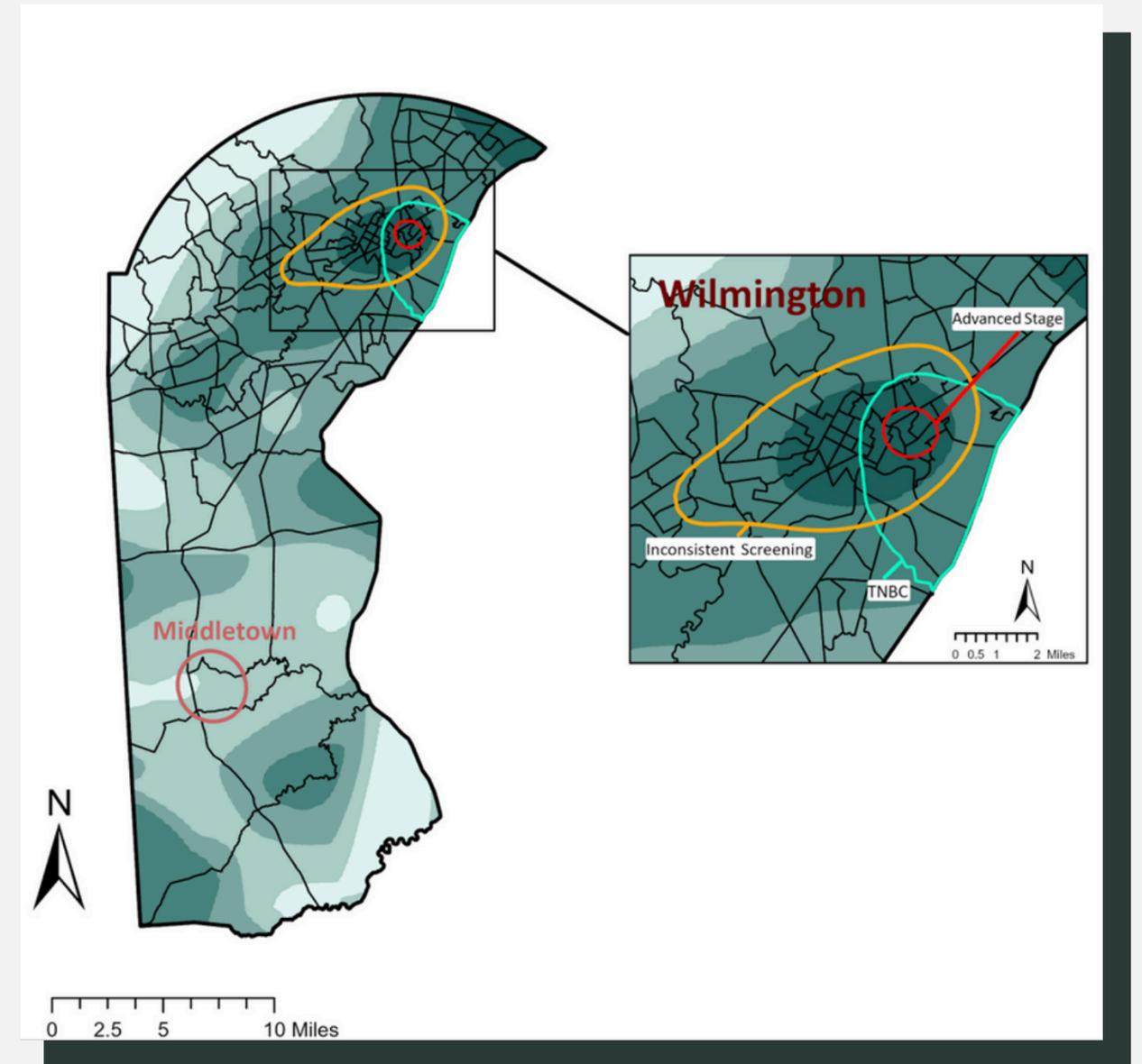


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CHW Breast Cancer Screening Program

By mapping cancer data down to the level of patient addresses, researchers showed how the **Wilmington hotspot** sits at the intersection of two other mapped risk zones: one with **higher rates of TNBC** and another where women are **less likely** to get regular breast cancer screenings



“Intensive prevention resources exactly where they’re needed.”



A community health worker is now embedded in the Wilmington hotspot to increase screening uptake, conduct breast cancer risk assessments, and connect to prevention programs.



Guaranteed Basic Income Program

Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium (DHMIC, dethrives.com)

2-Year pilot with Rosehill Community Center (ended in 2024)

Vulnerable pregnant women received a monthly **income of \$1,000** and wraparound services

High prenatal care, Low birth complications

Significant Return on Investment (ROI)



Policy Efforts – Pay Equity

Providing **12 weeks of paid parental leave** for eligible state employees, mothers, and fathers (*HB 3, 2017*)

Increasing the **minimum wage** in Delaware to \$15.00 by January 2025 (*SB 15, 2021*)

Providing a statewide **paid family and medical leave** insurance program (*SS 2 for SB 1 w/ HA 1, 2022*)



Policy Efforts – Maternal Health

Extends Medicaid coverage through the **first year postpartum** (HB 234, 2022)

Includes protections for **pregnant prisoners** regarding restraints (HB 342, 2022)

Provides **access to doula/midwifery services** for women in DOC custody (HB 345, 2022)

Creates a **breastfeeding and lactation program** for women in DOC custody (HB 3, 2025)



Moving Forward Together

Postpartum Care

Equitable care

Targeted, collaborative efforts

Co-create solutions



Thank you for joining!

Time for Q & A

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ChristianaCare

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