

MATERNAL MORTALITY

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Abstract

This session seeks to highlight the issue of health disparities in American maternal mortality, particularly how it affects black women, as an actionable public health crisis. The HBHE curriculum and course offerings have failed to acknowledge this health issue as one deserving special consideration. Currently, the United States is the only developed country in the world where maternal mortality is on the rise. The maternal death rate among black women in America, as a western nation, are comparable to maternal death rates experienced by women in resource poor countries such as Uzbekistan and Mexico. The black maternal death rate has garnered scrutiny by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations (UN) who have presented the subject as an international health issue. In this session, an overview of black maternal mortality will be explored through disentangling it from the aggregate American maternal mortality rate, examining the social determinants, highlighting the disproportional impact, and exploring ways in which targeted interventions can be pursued.

Recommended Readings

- Anderson, F. W. (2009). Maternal Mortality. *Clinical Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 52(2), 214-223. doi:10.1097/grf.0b013e3181a4bd53
- Brant, A. S., Worjolah, A., Caughey, A. B., & Washington, A. E. (2010). Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Obstetrical Outcomes and Care: Prevalence and Determinants. *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 202(4), 335-343. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajog.2009.10.864>
- Callaghan, W. M. (2012). Overview of Maternal Mortality in the United States. *Seminars in Perinatology*, 36(1), 2-6. doi:10.1053/j.semperi.2011.09.002 <https://www.propublica.org/article/black-women-disproportionately-suffer-complications-of-pregnancy-and-childbirth-lets-talk-about-it>
- Tavernise, S. (2016, September 21). Maternal Mortality Rate in U.S. Rises, Defying Global Trend, Study Finds. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/22/health/maternal-mortality.html>