

# December 8, 2025 Women & Children's Health Committee Zoom Meeting

## Meeting summary

### Quick recap

The meeting began with the Husky Limited Family Planning Benefit and Medicaid coverage changes. The main focus was on maternity care services in Connecticut, including findings from focus groups conducted with Black and Hispanic women about their experiences with maternity care and insurance barriers. The discussion concluded with recommendations for improving maternity care access and quality, including the importance of cultural competence, doula support, and translation services, with the next meeting scheduled for January 12, 2026.

### Next steps

- [Peter Hadler/DSS: Determine within the next month or two whether there's an opportunity to set up an alternative process for family planning coverage or make systems changes to streamline access](#)
- [Peter/DSS: Continue evaluating the manual process for identifying individuals eligible for family planning coverage, considering capacity for potentially 1,000 people per month](#)
- [Peter/DSS: Work on integrating family planning coverage directly into routine operations and system work in conjunction with Access Health](#)
- [Kasia Baca/DPH team: Share final research results with the committee and the Reproductive Rights Caucus within the House](#)
- [Kasia/DPH team: Complete end-of-interviews with staff from maternity care facilities and hospitals in Connecticut](#)
- [Kasia/DPH team: Work with the Connecticut Reproductive Justice Alliance to co-develop a list of recommendations to improve respectful maternity care in Connecticut](#)
- [Kasia/DPH team: Work with the Reproductive Justice Alliance to develop next steps given the focus group discussion findings](#)

## Summary

### Meeting Schedule and Presentation Coordination

The meeting began with a discussion about adjusting the agenda to accommodate a scheduling conflict, allowing DSS to present first. David Kaplan confirmed the meeting would start at 9:30, despite initial technical difficulties with the Zoom link. Representative Keitt and Casia coordinated

their presentation times, ensuring there would be enough overlap for their presenters. The meeting was set to be broadcast live on CTN, and participants were reminded to download presentation slides from the website.

### **HUSKY Family Planning Benefit Update**

The meeting focused on the HUSKY Limited Family Planning Benefit, where ICAN presented an update on the program's coverage and operational challenges. The presentation highlighted that HUSKY Family Planning provides limited benefits like annual checkups, birth control, and STI testing, but there are concerns about provider awareness and access to up-to-date information. Peter Hadler and Abby Shirk discussed the program's history and potential integration with full Medicaid coverage, noting that approximately 1,000 people per month might qualify for the limited benefit, and they are exploring manual processes to identify eligible individuals.

### **Medicaid and Maternal Healthcare Improvements**

The meeting focused on two main topics: Medicaid coverage changes and a presentation on respectful maternal healthcare. Peter discussed the need to streamline access to Medicaid coverage and mentioned ongoing efforts to improve the process. Sang presented findings from focus groups conducted with Black and Hispanic women in Connecticut about their experiences with maternity care. The study aimed to understand barriers to care and strategies for improvement, with participants recruited between April and July 2023. The presentation highlighted the importance of respectful maternity care and the need for systems-level changes to ensure quality care for all women.

### **Maternity Care Insurance Barriers Study**

Jennifer Morin presented findings from 11 focus groups conducted across Connecticut with 56 participants, split equally between Spanish and English speakers. The study revealed that insurance was a significant barrier to maternity care, with participants experiencing confusion about eligibility and coverage, including cases where insurance was discontinued shortly after childbirth despite promises of longer coverage. Participants also highlighted the need for better information in their native languages about programs like HUSKY and WIC, as well as available resources such as diapers.

### **Maternity Care Access Barriers Discussion**

The meeting focused on barriers and facilitators to maternity care services in Connecticut, as discussed by Kasia Baca and Jennifer Morin. Participants highlighted language barriers, transportation challenges, and long wait times as significant obstacles, while proximity to home, referrals from trusted sources, and access to doulas and midwives were noted as facilitators. Recommendations included improving empathy and compassion among staff, enhancing patient autonomy, and increasing access to translation services and culturally competent care. The group

also discussed the importance of doulas and midwives in supporting women, particularly those on Medicaid. Fatmata Williams inquired about the timeline of the work in relation to the recently launched maternity bundle, and Jennifer and Kasia emphasized the potential value of the findings for this initiative. The next meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2026.