

March 9, 2026 Women & Children's Health Committee Zoom Meeting

Meeting summary

Quick recap

The March meeting of the MAPOC Subcommittee on Women and Children's Health focused on the Connecticut Urgent Maternal Warning Signs Bracelet Initiative, presented by Ashley Starr and Marijane Carey. The initiative, led by the Connecticut Perinatal Collaborative and the Connecticut Hospital Association, aims to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity by improving clinical awareness of postpartum complications. The presenters discussed the implementation of the bracelet program, including statewide trainings for healthcare providers and community organizations, as well as the development of educational materials in multiple languages. They highlighted positive feedback from participants and the initiative's success in building community among postpartum women. The meeting also touched on the importance of including fathers in the program and the need for further outreach to diverse communities. Following the presentation, Co-Chairs Rep. Sarah Keitt and Amy Gagliardi discussed upcoming initiatives, including a presentation from the Connecticut Health Foundation on their maternal health blueprint and future presentations from DMHAS.

Next steps

- [Co-Chair Amy Gagliardi: Follow up with Latosha Johnson from DCF to schedule a meeting regarding the issue of women on methadone maintenance providing breast milk to babies in DCF custody.](#)
- [Amy: Coordinate and finalize dates for the three one-hour in-service lactation trainings for pediatricians, including organizing presentations by Sharon Ostfeld-Johns and the national nurse attorney, and delivering one session herself.](#)
- [Marilyn \(WIC\): Continue follow-up on how the WIC office can support and provide education to foster parents related to breastfeeding and methadone maintenance, as discussed in the previous meeting.](#)
- [Connecticut Hospital Association/Bracelet Initiative team: Continue to accept and implement suggestions for additional languages for patient handouts, including working on translations for Albanian, Chinese, Hindi, Arabic, and Polish, and welcoming further suggestions.](#)
- [Connecticut Hospital Association/Bracelet Initiative team: Welcome and review feedback and suggestions from hospitals and community partners to improve the Bracelet Initiative and update the implementation toolkit accordingly.](#)
- [Connecticut Hospital Association/Bracelet Initiative team: Encourage partners to share photos featuring the bracelets and forward them to the CHA communications team for amplification.](#)
- [Connecticut Fatherhood Initiative: Consider getting involved in supporting the Bracelet Initiative by reaching out to dads to increase their comfort and participation, as suggested by Marijane Carey.](#)

Summary

CTN Live Session Coordination

The meeting began when Marijane Carey introduced herself as a last-minute presenter for Allison Tyliczszak, who was dealing with a healthcare issue. The meeting continued with Ashley Starr Frechette joining.

Connecticut Maternal Warning Signs Initiative

The MAPOC Subcommittee on Women and Children's Health meeting featured a presentation on the Connecticut Urgent Maternal Warning Signs Bracelet Initiative, led by Ashley Starr Frechette and Marijane Carey. The initiative, which is state-funded and led by the Connecticut Perinatal Collaborative and the Connecticut Hospital Association, aims to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity by improving clinical awareness of postpartum complications. The presentation highlighted the success of statewide trainings for various healthcare providers and community-based organizations, as well as the positive feedback received. The initiative also includes the distribution of orange bracelets to postpartum patients, with the option of blank bracelets for those who prefer not to disclose their postpartum status.

Maternal Warning Signs Communication Toolkit

Ashley presented communication materials developed for the Bracelet Initiative, including patient and provider handouts, CDC's Hear Her campaign resources, and warning signs posters. These materials are available in multiple languages and can be accessed online. She emphasized the importance of educating both patients and healthcare providers about urgent maternal warning signs during pregnancy and postpartum. She also introduced a hospital implementation toolkit to support birthing hospitals in implementing the bracelet initiative.

Postpartum Health Awareness Initiative

The meeting focused on a postpartum bracelet initiative designed to raise awareness about postpartum health issues. Marijane and Amy discussed the program's positive reception and the importance of educating both mothers and their partners about the initiative. Rep. Keitt highlighted the program's role in building community for new mothers. Amy provided an update on follow-up actions regarding incarcerated women's access to breastfeeding support, mentioning ongoing efforts with DCF and the American Academy of Pediatrics. The group also discussed upcoming presentations from the Connecticut Health Foundation and DMHAS.