

Changing the Curriculum
Interprofessional Modules that Address Maternal Mortality in African American Women

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As of 2020, when compared to other industrialized nations, the maternal mortality rate in the United States is roughly three times that of the second highest of all other industrialized countries; with rates in African American women higher than their white counterparts. Social determinants of health, such as higher exposure to air pollutants, food deserts and long-term high levels of stress, are correlated to adverse obstetrical outcomes. Ignoring these social determinants of health along with the structural racism that persists today disproportionately affect Black communities and lead to mistrust and low quality of care compared to White communities. To address the maternal mortality rate in African American women, we are putting research to action to change the curriculum in higher education in order to discuss the challenges and structural barriers that impact African American maternal health. Shared anecdotes, testimonies and research through lectures, case studies and interview opportunities from Georgetown University School of Medicine healthcare professionals and medical students, emphasize the inequities that continue to be perpetuated in our healthcare system and society. By highlighting the dark history of structural racism, its role in the advancements of obstetrics and gynecology, how your zip code defines your health and introducing the concept of the fourth trimester through online modules and course development.