

# SACIMM and Healthy Start: Same Birthday, Same Mission

Plenary

Friday, November 5  
1:30–2:00 pm ET

*THE HEALTHY START TA & SUPPORT CENTER IS OPERATED BY THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CHILDREN'S HEALTH QUALITY (NICHQ). THIS PROJECT IS SUPPORTED BY THE HEALTH RESOURCES AND SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (HRSA) OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (HHS) UNDER GRANT NUMBER 1 UF5MC327500100 TITLED SUPPORTING HEALTHY START PERFORMANCE PROJECT.*



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# Our Speakers

**Ed Ehlinger, MD, MSPH**

ACTING CHAIRPERSON

SECRETARY'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INFANT AND MATERNAL MORTALITY

**Belinda Pettiford, MPH**

MEMBER

SECRETARY'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INFANT AND MATERNAL MORTALITY

BRANCH HEAD, DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH, WOMEN'S HEALTH BRANCH, NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

**Vanessa Lee, MPH**

PUBLIC HEALTH ANALYST/DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICIAL, SECRETARY'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON INFANT AND MATERNAL MORTALITY

DIVISION OF HEALTHY START AND PERINATAL SERVICES MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH BUREAU

HEALTH RESOURCES AND SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

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2021 HEALTHY START VIRTUAL GRANTEE'S MEETING  
HOSTED BY THE HEALTHY START TA & SUPPORT CENTER AT NICHQ  
ON NOVEMBER 4, 2021

**#HealthyStartVGM2021**  
**#HealthyStartStrong**  
**@HS\_TASC @NICHQ**



**Secretary's Advisory Committee on Infant and Maternal Mortality (SACIMM) and Healthy Start:  
Same Birthday - Same Mission**  
**Healthy Start Virtual Grantees Meeting**  
November 5, 2021

**Edward Ehlinger, MD, MSPH**  
Acting Chairperson, SACIMM

**Belinda Pettiford, MPH**  
SACIMM Member

**Vanessa Lee, MPH**  
Designated Federal Officer  
DHSPS/MCHB

**Vision: Healthy Communities, Healthy People**



# Session Objectives

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## **By the end of the session, participants will learn:**

- the history of SACIMM and its relationship to Healthy Start;
- the Committee's purpose/charge, and what the Committee has recommended to HHS to reduce infant and maternal mortality and eliminate disparities in these outcomes;
- which recommendations are relevant to Healthy Start and how grantees can influence SACIMM.

# History of SACIMM

Edward Ehlinger, MD, MSPH

Acting Chairperson, SACIMM



# Priorities and Duties of SACIMM

**Vanessa Lee, MPH**

Public Health Analyst/Designated Federal Official (DFO) for SACIMM

Division of Healthy Start & Perinatal Services, HRSA/MCHB



# Maternal and Child Health Bureau Strategic Plan

## MCHB MISSION

To improve the health and well-being of America's mothers, children, and families.

## MCHB VISION

An America where all mothers, children, and families are thriving and reach their full potential.

### GOAL 1

Assure **access** to high-quality and equitable health services to optimize health and well-being for all MCH populations.

### GOAL 2

Achieve **health equity** for MCH populations.

### GOAL 3

Strengthen **public health capacity and workforce** for MCH.

### GOAL 4

Maximize **impact** through leadership, partnership, and stewardship.



# Description of Committee's Duties

- Advise the Secretary of HHS on department activities, *partnerships, policies, and programs* directed at reducing infant and *maternal mortality, severe maternal morbidity*, and improving the health status of infants and *women before, during, and after pregnancy*.
- Provide the Secretary with advice on how to best coordinate federal, state, local, *tribal, and territorial governmental efforts* that are designed to improve infant mortality, *related adverse birth outcomes*, and maternal health, including administration of *the Title V MCH Block Grant Program*, the Healthy Start program and maternal and infant health objectives from the Healthy People 2030 Objectives. *Provide advice on how to influence similar efforts in the private and voluntary sectors.*
- *Review and inform the Secretary of factors contributing to disparities and inequities* seen in birth outcomes for women and infants. *Provide guidance and recommendations on the policies, programs, resources, and structural/systems level changes required to address the disparities and inequities in infant mortality, related adverse birth outcomes, and maternal health outcomes.*



# SACIMM Priority Areas

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- The Committee continues to prioritize:
  - infant mortality;
  - maternal mortality and severe maternal morbidity;
  - the health of women before, during, and after pregnancy; and
  - the disparities seen across all of these outcomes.
- In the last year, members have chosen to also focus on the **impact of racism** on maternal and infant health; the **impact of environmental conditions**; and **migrant and Border health**.



# SACIMM Website

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For more information about the Committee, past meeting minutes, recordings, presentation slides, and transcripts – please visit the **HRSA ACIMM website**:

**<https://www.hrsa.gov/advisory-committees/infant-mortality/index.html>**



# SACIMM Recommendations

**Belinda Pettiford, MPH**

SACIMM Member

Branch Head, Division of Public Health, Women's Health Branch

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services



# SACIMM Recommendations to HHS Secretary

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In August 2021, the Committee submitted a set of policy and program recommendations to HHS Secretary Becerra in the following areas:

- Maternity and infant care systems and financing of care
- Workforce expansion and diversification
- Environmental conditions
- Migrant and border health
- Data and research for action



# Maternity and infant care systems and financing of care

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## Examples of recommendations:

- **Extend Medicaid coverage** for women following delivery for at least one year
- Pilot **alternative Medicaid financing models** for pregnancy care
- Expand and sustain **access to telehealth**
- Encourage states to **implement risk-appropriate care**
- Increase overall **funding to the Indian Health Service (IHS)**
- **Increase birthplace options**, including expanding accredited free-standing birth centers
- **Expand the Healthy Start program and Home Visiting**



# Workforce expansion and diversification

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## Examples of recommendations:

- **Expand and diversify** (racially, culturally, and linguistically) the MCH and Perinatal workforce
- **Expand the use of midwives** and fund midwifery training
- Explore ways to **finance doula and Community Health Worker Services**, and to fund doula training

# Environmental conditions

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## Examples of recommendations:

- **Prioritize pregnant and breastfeeding women and infants in environmental research and policies** protecting them from toxic and harmful environmental exposures in the air, water, food, and consumer products
- **Eliminate lead** in consumer products and all other sources
- Develop, implement, and support programs and policies to **justly compensate community members harmed by environmental contaminants**
- Assure all **infrastructure projects** include a focus on equity and improving health
- Include a focus on mothers and infants in **responses to the climate crisis**



# Migrant and border health

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## Examples of recommendations:

- Establish **new integrated** Customs and Border Protection (CBP)/Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) **facilities** designed to meet the needs of migrant pregnant women, infants, children, and families
- Create and support a **national network of obstetric and pediatric specialty care providers** for pregnant women and children with special healthcare needs who are released
- Develop a program to provide **social and mental health services for migrant families who experienced child separations** under the “Zero Tolerance” program during 2017-2018
- Support **COVID-19 vaccine provision for migrant families** entering the U.S.



# Data and research for action

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## Examples of recommendations:

- Strengthen **research and data for equity**, and encourage and support scientists and researchers from diverse backgrounds
- Expand investments in **robust and interoperable data and surveillance systems**
- **Augment mortality and morbidity review**, including MMRCs and FIMRs
- Prioritize **inclusion or justify the exclusion of women of reproductive age, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and their infants in all health services research** including vaccine and medication studies
- **Monitor the impact of systemic disparities and inequalities** of governmental responses to public health emergencies



# *How can Healthy Start influence SACIMM?*



# THANK YOU!



# Contact Information

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**Vanessa Lee, MPH**

**Designated Federal Official, ACIMM**

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**Web: [mchb.hrsa.gov](http://mchb.hrsa.gov)**

**Web for ACIM: <https://www.hrsa.gov/advisory-committees/infant-mortality/about.html>**



# Q&A

*2021 HEALTHY START VIRTUAL GRANTEE'S MEETING  
HOSTED BY THE HEALTHY START TA & SUPPORT CENTER AT  
NICHQ ON NOVEMBER 3, 2021*

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