



## Midwifery Working Group First Meeting

Thursday, October 5, 2023

3:00-4:00pm

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### Zoom information:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87171639583?pwd=b0NNNE1rUnI5WmRiMGpMVHBMSGViQT09>

Meeting ID: 871 7163 9583

Passcode: 631905

## Minutes

**Members present:** Priya Morganstern, Christina Mukon, Christy D'Aquila, Kara Crawford, Daileann Hemmings, Fatmata Williams, Lucinda Canty, Manisha Juthani, Michelle Telfer, SciHonor Devotion, Sera Gadbois, Tanya Wills

DPH Staff: Chris Andresen, Dante Costa, Elliann Sylvester, Melia Allan

### Commissioner's Introduction

- Public Health Commissioner Manisha Juthani spoke about the importance of this working group and the members committed to getting this work done. She said: "we all are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of birthing people and the children that we bring into this world. This is a team sport. This requires everybody at the interface of this work to come together."
- The Commissioner emphasized the importance of having the voices of midwives at the table when working to provide safe care in Connecticut using an equity lens.

### Introductions

- Dante Costa opened the meeting for the group and invited all working group members to introduce themselves. Members talked about their background related to midwifery and shared what they were looking forward to accomplishing in the group.
- Dante also acknowledged the publicity of meetings, letting members know that these meetings are posted to the Secretary of State's website, and that they are welcome to circulate the Zoom link with individuals they think may want to listen in.

### Background and Administration of the Group

- Dante framed the group as an extension of last year's scope of practice committee, with a broader range of topics to focus on, including: improvements in birthing care choices, access to community birth transformed into practical terms, ongoing conversation about direct-entry midwives, certified midwives, talking about inter professional coordination
- Dante discussed the role of chair/co-chair and responsibilities

- Sera Gadbois expressed interest in being a co-chair of the group
- Dante asked the group if they would be interested in creating bylaws or not, Priya suggested the group does not implement rules and see how it goes, there was general consensus here

### **General Discussion**

- Dante started the discussion by sharing some important themes members mentioned in the initial survey for the group. Topics included:
  - Unifying midwifery – increasing solidarity and collaboration
  - Allowing midwives voices to be heard
  - People are interested in creating equitable outcomes but also opportunities for midwives
  - Supporting midwives in their full scope of practice
  - Clearer and easier transfer from out-of-hospital to hospital settings
  - Equitable licensure pathways
- Lucinda and Dante observed that this list included a lot of common threads and overlap.
- The group discussed how this group differed from scope of practice working group from last year
  - This group is broader than the scope of practice process, as this includes more kinds of midwives than just certified midwives (CMs)
- Lucinda shared about the stigma that still surrounds midwives, dating back to the delegitimization of Black midwives by physicians. She expressed that she wants to flip the script and work to uplift the role midwives play and can continue to play
- Daileann emphasized the importance of educating people about differences between say a doula and a midwife, and how midwives and birthing centers should work in tandem with hospitals, instead of being seen as competition
- Discussion of the birth center regulations which came out of a previous working group, Dante shared that these would begin in early 2024 as rules and regulations, until they are officially approved by the Legislature
- Tanya Wills brought up the harmful nature of assumptions that people hold about nurse midwives, based on professional title alone, and shared information on how midwives are licensed in New York
- Amy brought up wanting to focus the group on community birth, Dante agrees that this falls within the statutory description of the group
- Christina requested that Tanya's points on the assumptions around different types of midwives be brought forth at the start of the next meeting