



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 15, 2021

Media Contact: Emily Ruff,
Director of External Engagement, Diversity Science
Email: equalcare@diversityscience.org
Phone: 612 524 5841

Project launch for free capacity-building resources addressing implicit bias, reproductive justice, and inequities in perinatal health care

The Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth Project, led by Rachel Hardeman, Ph.D., MPH, builds understanding of implicit bias and reproductive justice in perinatal care; online training course and resources are now available.

(April 15, 2021) -- PORTLAND, Ore. -- Diversity Science, a professional services firm focused on accelerating progress towards diversity, equity, and inclusion in health care, has developed an online training course and resources on implicit bias and reproductive justice. The course can be accessed on Diversity Science's [website](#).

Under the direction of Rachel Hardeman, PhD., a leading national reproductive health equity researcher and Founding Director of the Center for Antiracism Research for Health Equity at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, the content was deeply informed by the latest scientific evidence and lived experiences of Black birthing people and developed using a collaborative approach that included expert and stakeholder review.

In addition to the online course, Diversity Science is releasing several free companion materials including a facilitation guide, support resources for Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) staff or those experiencing marginalization, and information about subsequent training and capacity building around health equity for individuals and organizations. Diversity Science will also be offering workshops and services to support health equity initiatives.

The course and resources serve as foundational capacity-building tools to support organizations in the vital work of changing practices and policies to eliminate inequities in perinatal and reproductive health outcomes for Black women and birthing people. To maximize impact, the course and resources are available via both Diversity Science's [website](#) and also direct download.

“This training course represents a starting point on the journey to overcome racial inequities in maternal health. It is a critical first step from which deeper organizational and systems change must build to have real and lasting impact.”

- Dr. Rachel Hardeman, Project Director, Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth Project.

Today's launch of the Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth Project releases all three parts in a series of interactive e-learning course. Each of the three course segments are approximately 20 minutes in length and geared to hospital and birth center providers. The course focuses on implicit bias and reproductive justice in accordance with the training requirements outlined in the California Dignity in Pregnancy and Childbirth Act ([Senate Bill 464](#)). This is the first free course to explicitly address the requirements of California SB464. The course and resources were developed with support from the [California Health Care Foundation](#), a nonprofit independent philanthropy based in Oakland, CA.

SB 464, authored by State Sen. Holly Mitchell, aims to reduce pregnancy-related preventable deaths, severe illnesses, and associated health disparities by addressing implicit bias among perinatal health providers. The bill, which went into effect in January 2020, requires all health care providers involved in perinatal services at hospitals and alternative birth centers to undergo evidence-based implicit bias training. The bill requires that this training program will teach medical professionals to identify and correct any previously or current unconscious or conscious biases and misinformation; it also stipulates that the training must address personal, interpersonal, institutional, structural and cultural barriers to access to health care. The materials Diversity Science is releasing today address all the requirements of the bill.

Despite impressive reductions in maternal mortality, Black mothers/birthing people in California, as in the rest of the nation, remain three to four times as likely to die from pregnancy/birth-related causes and twice as likely to suffer a maternal morbidity – such as hemorrhage and infection — than other racial/ethnic groups. In speaking about the intended impact of SB 464, Sen. Holly Mitchell noted “Black women deserve better.

Bias, implicit or explicit, should no longer impact a woman’s ability to deliver a full-term baby or to survive childbirth.”

The training course released today represents an important step in ensuring that perinatal care providers have soundly-developed, Black expert- and community-informed educational tools to equip them to provide the highest quality perinatal care to Black mothers/birthing people.

Learn more and download the online course and resources free of charge at www.diversityscience.org/equal-perinatal-care.

About Diversity Science

Diversity Science is guided by a national group of consultants and DEI practitioners who work to build inclusive organizations and combat health disparities related to bias and inequity. We translate over 50 years of research and applied knowledge into practical and effective tools and strategies with lasting impact. Diversity Science’s evidence-based approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion gives you the confidence to achieve meaningful change. Learn more at www.diversityscience.org.

About Rachel Hardeman, Ph.D.

Rachel Hardeman, Ph.D., is a reproductive health equity researcher whose program of research applies the tools of population health science and health services research to elucidate a critical and complex determinant of health inequity -- racism. Dr. Hardeman leverages the frameworks of critical race theory and reproductive justice to inform her equity-centered work which aims to build the empirical evidence of racism’s impact on health, particularly for Black birthing people and their babies. Dr. Hardeman is the Founding Director of the Center for Antiracism Research for Health Equity at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. Learn more at www.rachelhardeman.com.

About California Healthcare Foundation

The [California Health Care Foundation](http://www.chcf.org) is dedicated to advancing meaningful, measurable improvements in the way the health care delivery system provides care to the people of California, particularly those with low incomes and those whose needs are not well served by the status quo. We work to ensure that people have access to the care they need, when they need it, at a price they can afford. Learn more about CHCF’s work in Black birth equity: <https://www.chcf.org/project/improving-birth-equity-california/>

###

For more information or interviews with project team/subject matter experts, contact Emily Ruff at equalcare@diversityscience.org or 612 524 5841.