



# Regional Maternal Health Coalition

## Welcome!

**JUNE 12, 2025**

**8:30 AM – 4:00 PM**

**HILTON SCRANTON**

**100 ADAMS AVENUE, SCRANTON, PA**

Dear Coalition Members and Partners,

On behalf of Maternal and Family Health Services, we extend our warmest welcome and deepest appreciation for your participation in the Regional Maternal Health Coalition. Your time, commitment, and shared dedication to improving maternal health outcomes are invaluable to this work.

MFHS is honored to serve as the backbone organization of this coalition, supporting and coordinating efforts that are essential to addressing maternal mortality in our region. Together, we are building a foundation for lasting change—grounded in collaboration, equity, and community engagement.

We look forward to continuing this important work with each of you in the years ahead. By joining forces, we are making a real and lasting impact on the health and well-being of mothers and families throughout our communities.

With gratitude,

***Dr. Maria Montoro Edwards, President and CEO, MFHS***



Visit [mfhs.org/rmhc](https://mfhs.org/rmhc) or  
scan for resources.

# Agenda

## WELCOME ADDRESS 9:00AM-9:15AM



**Dr. Maria Montoro Edwards**  
President and CEO, MFHS

**Dr. Maria Montoro Edwards** has served as President and CEO of Maternal and Family Health Services (MFHS) since October 2020. She works to build organizational capacity and ensure the sustainability and growth of MFHS initiatives. She leads with a focus on equity and inclusion as the organization meets changing community needs and is connecting with staff and community members throughout the MFHS service network to find new opportunities to have a positive impact on women, children, and families. She serves on the Pennsylvania Maternal Mortality Review Committee and the board of PA Alliance of Family Planning Councils. She also serves on the boards of Northeast Regional Cancer Institute, Telespond Senior Services and Northeast Pennsylvania Nonprofit Community Assistance Center. Maria has a PhD in Human Development, with a concentration in higher education from Marywood University and a Masters in Studio Art from Marywood University. Maria and her husband Kevin share three children and four grandchildren.



**Jill Avery-Stoss, MBA**  
President, The Institute

**Jill Avery-Stoss** joined The Institute in June 2018 to fill the newly-created role of Research, Data, Intern & Administrative Coordinator. She assists with the collection and management of data for purposes of ethical and efficient analysis. She visits partner campuses to market The Institute's internship opportunities, and participates in event-planning logistical activities as well. In 2021, Jill was promoted to Director of Operations to reflect the diversity in her job description and the additional marketing and communication functions she successfully mastered in 2020. In 2022, Jill was named Chief Operating Officer after expanding into both research and administrative management functions and taking on project management, fundraising, and other executive leadership responsibilities of the organization. In 2024, Jill Avery-Stoss assumed the role of President of The Institute, effective January 2025.

Jill's primary objective is to contribute to productive and proactive community impact. Her background and knowledge of underserved populations are ideally suited to the region's development needs.



## MORNING INFORMATIONAL SESSION 9:15AM-10:45AM

### Session 1 9:15am-10:00am: Healthy Moms, Vibrant Futures: Delivering Pennsylvania's Maternal Health Strategic Action Plan



**Sara Goulet**

*Special Advisor to the Pennsylvania Secretary of Human Services*

**Sara Goulet** joined the Department of Human Services as a special advisor to the secretary in May 2021 after more than four years as a deputy press secretary for Gov. Tom Wolf. Sara works on maternal health initiatives, combining her health and public safety experience to find ways to support all Pennsylvanians, but especially our most vulnerable. She also works on the state's integration of 9-8-8 crisis response, and initiatives to support parenting students.

### Session 2 10:00am-10:45am: Unpacking Maternal Health Data in Pennsylvania: Trends, Gaps, and Interventions



**Dr. Aasta Mehta, MD, MPP**

*Director of Philadelphia Department of Public Health's Division of Maternal, Child, and Family Health*

**Dr. Aasta Mehta** is the Director of the Division of Maternal, Child, and Family Health (MCFH) at the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH), where she leads efforts to improve reproductive, adolescent, and child health through direct services, data-driven policy, and strategic partnerships. She oversees programs such as Birth Justice Philly, Philly Joy Bank, and Philly Families CAN while advancing policies to ensure equitable care and support for communities across Philadelphia. At the state and national levels, Dr. Mehta serves as Co-Chair of both the Pennsylvania Maternal Mortality Review Committee and Pennsylvania Perinatal Quality Collaborative Advisory Group, and Co-Lead for the Policy, Dissemination, and Communication Core of AMETHIST@Penn, an NIH-funded implementation science hub that supports Maternal Health Research Centers of Excellence across the country in their efforts to reduce maternal mortality and address racial disparities.

## BREAK 10:45-11:00AM



## **PRIORITY TEAM BREAKOUT SESSIONS 11:00AM–12:30PM**

Each breakout session will be a facilitated discussion on the northeast regional drivers impacting each priority area, and potential local solutions and strategies.

Institute staff members and subcommittee chairs will lead the discussion and document the responses and recommendations to present back to the full coalition during the afternoon session.

### **Priority Team 1: Access to High Quality Care**

#### **ELECTRIC CITY BALLROOM**

**Brigitte Guariglia**

*The Institute*

**Institute Staff Breakout Lead**

**Lisa Bailey-Davis**

*Geisinger*

**Subcommittee Chair**

### **Priority Team 2: Supporting Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder**

#### **WAVERLY ROOM**

**Ethan Van Gorden**

*The Institute*

**Institute Staff Breakout Lead**

**Maria Kolcharno**

*The Wright Center*

**Subcommittee Chair**

### **Priority Team 3: Addressing Social Determinants of Health**

#### **OLD FORGE ROOM**

**Sarah Bender**

*The Institute*

**Institute Staff Breakout Lead**

**Cindy Kennedy**

*MFHS*

**Subcommittee Chair**

### **Priority Team 4: Improving Rural Health Maternity Care Deserts**

#### **DUNMORE ROOM**

**Jill Avery-Stoss**

*The Institute*

**Institute Staff Breakout Lead**

**Terry McCloskey**

*Wyoming County Healthy Family Partnership*

**Subcommittee Chair**

### **Priority Team 5: Expanding and Diversifying the Maternal Health Workforce**

#### **CASEY'S CORNER**

**Tim Ooms**

*The Institute*

**Institute Staff Breakout Lead**

**London McPhatter**

*MFHS*

## **LUNCH 12:30PM–1:15PM**



# BREAKOUT GROUP FINDINGS AND GAP AND ASSET ANALYSIS 1:15PM-2:00PM

Led by The Institute

## PANEL DISCUSSION 2:00PM-3:30PM

This dynamic panel discussion will explore key strategies and lived experiences across five critical areas of maternal health—access to care, behavioral health, rural health, workforce diversity, and the social factors that shape outcomes.



### Moderated by Dr. Lia Richards-Palmiter

**Dr. Lia Richards-Palmiter** is an Assistant Professor of Social Work at the University of the District of Columbia. Dr. Richards-Palmiter received her MSW from the University of Denver and her PhD from Marywood University. She is a licensed clinical social worker with extensive clinical experience in mental health, racial identity, trauma informed care and DEI work with schools, corporations and communities. She has worked in the field of social work in hospital settings, higher education, private practice, and community settings. She has worked extensively in Northeastern Pennsylvania with the Black community and policy makers. Dr. Richards-Palmiter has taught BSW courses across the curriculum, MSW courses in research, ethics, practice, diversity and macro work and in PhD courses in critical writing, diversity and independent studies.

### Panelists:



### Claudia Streets Cramer

**Claudia Streets Cramer, MA** is a maternal health advocate, speaker and research-trained leader with a deep commitment to advancing equitable care for women and families. Originally from Philadelphia and now based in rural Saylorsburg, PA, she brings both professional insight and lived expertise as a wife and mother of nine, including a child with Down syndrome. Claudia holds a Master of Arts in Human Services with a concentration in Marriage and Family from Liberty University and completed maternal health research training through a joint UNC-Chapel Hill and CHOP study on eliminating barriers to care for at-risk women.



### Dr. Amanda Flicker

**Amanda Flicker, MD, CPE, FACOG** is the Chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology and the Chief Medical Executive of the Women's Health Service Line at Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) in eastern Pennsylvania. Presently, she is also serving as the Interim Clinical Leader of the Women's Health Service Line for Jefferson Health. Prior to becoming Chair, Dr. Flicker served as the Medical Director for Labor & Delivery, Chief of Obstetrics, and Vice-chair for Quality at LVHN. She was also a founding partner of the Connections program, which compassionately provides care to pregnant women with substance use disorders.





## Panelists (cont.):



### Dr. Annie Masterson

**Annie K. Masterson, MD** specializes in obstetrics and gynecology. She provides women's health care for teens through adults including Pap smears, pelvic exams, maternal fetal medicine, birth control counseling, prenatal care, breast exams and gynecologic surgery. Dr. Masterson earned her medical degree from Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. After medical school, she completed a residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Cooper University Hospital in Camden, where she served as chief resident. She serves as assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine in Scranton. She's also an accomplished presenter and researcher, showcasing her work at conferences across Pennsylvania and Connecticut.



### Dr. Imanni Sheppard

**Dr. Sheppard** is an Associate Professor of Medical Humanities and Theme Lead for Social Justice and Health Equity at Geisinger Commonwealth School of Medicine. She is also the Director of Medical Education and Social Scientific Research at the Medical Humanities and Health Disparities Institute where she works with community organizations to help build medical educational materials and develop health and wellness programming for sustainability. In addition, Dr. Sheppard is a member of Xavier University of Louisiana's Community Advisory Board for the College of Pharmacy's Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities Research and Education, and a former Ambassador for the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)'s Collaborative for Health Equity: to Act, Research, and Generate Evidence (CHARGE).



### Dr. Marc Rabin

**Marc H. Rabin, M.D., FACOG** is board certified in obstetrics and gynecology and is a staff physician at Moses Taylor Hospital. He received his medical degree at Hahnemann University School of Medicine in 1991. Dr. Rabin completed his residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Cooper Hospital/University Medical Center in 1995. He is a fellow of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. He is board certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology and serves as the medical director of Maternal and Family Health Services. Dr. Rabin sees patients in MFHS's Scranton Circle of Care office.

## CLOSING REMARKS AND NEXT STEPS 3:30PM–4:00PM

Dr. Maria Montoro Edwards

