



## Working to make pregnancy and birth **safer for Black women.**

While birth carries risks for any woman, the number of Black mothers harmed during pregnancy and birth is significantly higher than for other groups of mothers. National data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is eye-opening—Black women are three times more likely to experience maternal harm than white women and those over 30 are four to five times more likely to die during pregnancy and birth. The CDC also found this high rate of harm was not linked to a mother's lack of resources or lower levels of education. In fact, college-educated Black women are more than five times more likely to die than college-educated white women.

This gulf between the frequency of harm to Black and white mothers is why the MedStar Health Equity Research team developed the Mother's Voice project. The project is part of the D.C. Safe Babies Safe Moms program at MedStar Health.

The initiative, funded by the A. James & Alice B. Clark Foundation, is a partnership between MedStar Health, Community of Hope, and Mamatoto Village. It provides at-risk mothers and infants with access to a range of resources, including prenatal and postpartum care, help with housing and food, assistance accessing social and legal services, nutrition counseling, and behavioral and mental health care. To date, the initiative has touched more than 18,000 patients' lives through more than 2,000 visits per month. More than 5,500 babies have been born under the care of D.C. Safe Babies Safe Moms.

### Letter from the president.

The Jesuit tradition of *cura personalis*—care of the whole person—upon which our hospital was founded, is reflected in the important work we do to serve our community. We are proud to highlight the D.C. Safe Babies Safe Moms initiative, which provides wellness education and services including diabetes control, mental health, prenatal and postpartum care, breastfeeding, health screenings, and nutrition counseling.

The outstanding efforts of the D.C. Safe Babies Safe Moms initiative are detailed in this report to the community, and we are very proud to share with you this example of our long-standing tradition of serving the families of the District of Columbia and the greater community.

Thank you for your interest in, and support of, our hospital, and for recognizing our commitment to the community we so proudly serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Sachtleben".

Michael C. Sachtleben

Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer,  
Washington Region,

President,  
MedStar Georgetown University Hospital

Karey Sutton, PhD, scientific director of Health Equity Research at MedStar Health, leads the Mother’s Voice project. She and her team are working on a new approach to improving maternal safety. The end goal of their work is a maternal safety reporting system and toolkit to accurately capture information about preventable harm to mothers, from unsafe conditions and near misses to serious harm and death, as well as information about provider bias and its negative effect on care.

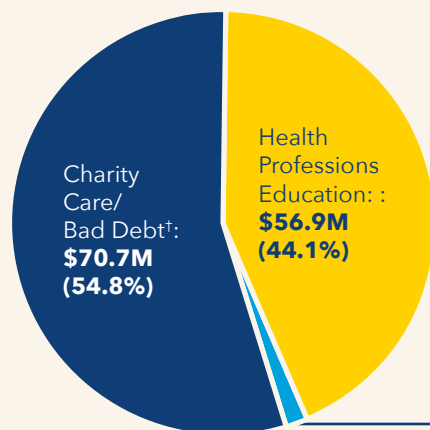


What’s unique about this project is that it’s based on feedback from mothers who receive care at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital and MedStar Washington Hospital Center.

“No one has talked to birthing individuals,” Dr. Sutton explains. “To remedy that, we both survey and conduct one-on-one interviews with mothers who’ve experienced a maternal harm event. We’re also including the women we interview in reviewing the data and sharing it with the wider community, making them active partners in our work. We’re focused on changing the system surrounding childbirth based on what birthing individuals have experienced to improve safety for all mothers.”

*\*Note: We recognize not all birthing individuals identify as women or mothers. We’ve used the terms women and mothers for simplicity, but these terms are meant to be inclusive of all birthing individuals.*

“We’re focused on changing the system surrounding childbirth based on what birthing individuals have experienced to improve safety for all mothers.”  
 –Karey Sutton, PhD, scientific director of Health Equity Research at MedStar Health



## 2022 Community benefit contribution: \$129.1M

\*Includes subsidies, community health improvement services, community building activities, financial contributions, and community benefit operations  
 †Includes Medicaid assessments

Community Services\*: \$1.5M (1.1%)

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To learn more about the community health programs at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital, please visit [MedStarHealth.org/CommunityHealth](https://www.MedStarHealth.org/CommunityHealth)