

# A NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR MATERNAL TELEHEALTH SERVICES IN THE STATE OF HAWAII

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## BACKGROUND/SIGNIFICANCE:

### Healthcare System in Hawai'i:

- 6 publically inhabited islands
- Only 1 Level 3 maternity hospital
- 10% of the land mass is urban
- Access to healthcare services is fragmented



### Maternal Health in Hawai'i

- 1.4 million population
- ~17,000 births each year
- ~ 5000 women (25%) must travel to Honolulu for prenatal ultrasound examinations and high risk pregnancy care.
- Interisland travel is almost exclusively by fixed-wing airplane
  - \$100-300 round trip, plus
  - \$75 taxi fare which is a public health burden
  - Lodging
- Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, maternal telehealth services were being considered to increase access to prenatal care services.

## PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES:

Conduct a multidimensional needs assessment for maternal telehealth services across the state of Hawai'i

## METHODS/APPROACH/EVALUATION STRATEGY:

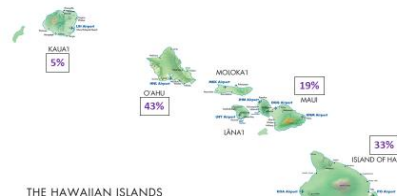
- 1) Secure funding to conduct the needs assessment
- 2) Assemble a Maternal Telehealth Task Force/Committee to implement the project
- 3) Convene a Maternal Telehealth Summit to obtain feedback from
  - FQHCs
  - Large hospital systems
  - Critical access hospitals
  - Local health practitioners
- 4) Meet with Stakeholders (Lieutenant Governor, CMS, Insurance Payers, Telecommunications Public Utilities, University of Hawai'i Leadership)
- 5) Partner with telehealth consultants from UAMS

## OUTCOMES/RESULTS:

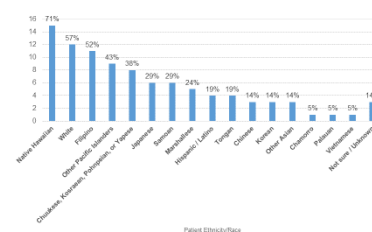
- The Hawai'i State DOH issued \$14,000 in funding to convene a state-wide summit on Maternal Telehealth on October 9-11, 2019 in partnership with the PBTRC, HPCA, ACOG, University of Hawai'i which resulted in:
- Pre- and Post-surveys
  - Sharing of "Best Practices"
  - Round table discussions / focus groups
  - Site visits to meet with local leadership to evaluate equipment and technology
  - Writing grants to FCC, CARES, USDA
  - Drafting Federal legislation

## OUTCOMES/RESULTS:

### Location of Respondents



### Patient Demographics



### MFM Referrals

- 76% of providers refer patients to other clinics for:
  1. MFM consultations (87% of responses)
  2. Amniocentesis & chorionic villus sampling, Doppler studies, Fetal echocardiography, Genetic testing & counseling, Ultrasound examinations (all tied at 73% of responses)

### Top 3 Barriers to Prenatal Services

- Cost of transit/lack of childcare
- Lack of transit/lack of support
- Distance/length of travel

## DISCUSSION:

- Findings from Facilitated Discussions and Site Visits
- Lack of specialty-trained personnel on neighbor islands (sonographers, genetic counselors, MFM Specialists)
  - Lack of reliable broadband internet
  - Lack of ultrasound image storage and reporting network
  - Lack of telehealth-ready equipment for real time exams
  - Funding, reimbursement, compliance, legal, MOU issues
  - No coordination or sharing of telehealth platforms

## SUMMARY/CONCLUSION:

We recommend that a Maternal Telehealth System for the State of Hawai'i be created as a public utility

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

- COVID-19 pandemic prompted rapid adoption of MFM video consultations to neighbor islands
- MI-Home program piloted to promote home visitations to provide mobile telehealth access
- Innovations with Bluetooth®
- Over \$2M in grants submitted

