



# 2026 Northeast Regional Maternal Health Coalition Seminar

JUNE 11, 2026 | 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM  
HILTON SCRANTON | 100 ADAMS AVENUE, SCRANTON, PA

## REGISTRATION & BREAKFAST 8:30AM–9:30AM

## WELCOME ADDRESS 9:30AM–9:45AM

Dr. Maria Montoro Edwards, President and CEO, MFHS

## OPENING SPEAKER 9:45AM–10:30AM

### State of Maternal Health in PA

Sara Goulet, Special Advisor to the Secretary, DHS

## BREAK 10:30AM–10:45AM

## PERINATAL TIPS TRAINING SESSION 10:45AM–12:00PM

### Perinatal Mental Health Essentials

Dr. Ritika Baweja, Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Obstetrics and Gynecology, Penn State College of Medicine

## LUNCH & VENDOR TABLES 12:00PM–1:00PM

## PRIORITY TEAM UPDATES 1:15PM–2:00PM

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

Institute Staff Lead: Brigitte Guariglia

Subcommittee Chair: London McPhatter, MFHS

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

Institute Staff Lead: Ethan Van Gorden

Subcommittee Chair: Maria Kolcharno, The Wright Center

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

Institute Staff Lead: Sarah Bender

Subcommittee Chair: Cindy Kennedy, MFHS

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

Institute Staff Lead: Jill Avery-Stoss

Subcommittee Chair: Terri McCloskey, Wyoming County Health Family Partnership

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

Institute Staff Lead: Tim Ooms

Subcommittee Chair Breakout Lead: Lia Richards-Palmiter, PhD, MSW and DEI Consultant

## AFTERNOON SPEAKER 2:00PM–2:30PM

### Gap and Asset Analysis & Presentation of NRMHC Asset Matrix

Jill Avery-Stoss, President, The Institute

## PANEL DISCUSSION 2:30PM–4:00PM

Tracey Matisak - Moderator

Kristen Jenkins, CRNP, Lead Nurse Practitioner, MFHS

Yurii Harden, LCSW, PMH-C, Director of Behavioral Health Services, MFHS

Laurie Waskovich, MS, RD, CLC, Nutrition Services Administrator (WIC Nutrition Program), MFHS

Lori Phillips, RN, BSN, CARN, Nurse Home Visitor, Nurse-Family Partnership, MFHS

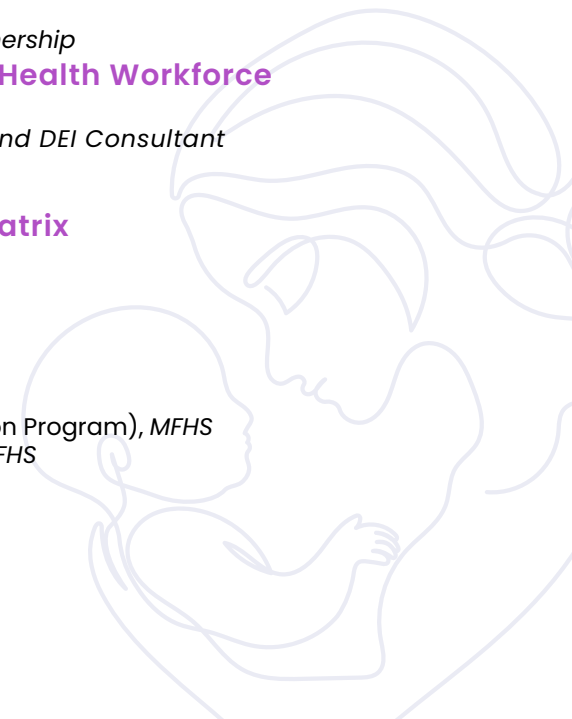
Angela Zaino-Hallock, Public Health Dental Hygiene Practitioner, MFHS

Maria Cimini-Bello, CHW, Maternal Child Advocate, MFHS

Melissa Yarmey, Practice Administrator, MFHS

## CLOSING REMARKS & NEXT STEPS 4:00PM

Marc Rabin, M.D., OB-GYN, Commonwealth Health & Medical Director, MFHS



# Welcome!

Dear Coalition Members and Partners,

On behalf of Maternal and Family Health Services (MFHS), we extend our sincere gratitude and appreciation for your dedication, partnership, and contributions to the Northeast Regional Maternal Health Coalition throughout the past year.

The accomplishments of this coalition are a testament to the power of collaboration and the shared commitment of organizations, professionals, advocates, and community members working toward a common goal: improving maternal health outcomes and reducing maternal mortality and morbidity across our region.

MFHS is honored to serve as the backbone organization for this important initiative, supporting and coordinating the collective efforts that drive meaningful change. Over the past year, your expertise, leadership, and engagement have strengthened our work and helped build a more connected and responsive system of care for mothers and families.

The challenges facing maternal health cannot be solved by any one organization alone. It is through our partnerships, shared learning, and coordinated action that we create lasting impact. By working together, we are able to leverage our collective strengths, address barriers more effectively, and advance solutions that promote equity, improve access to care, and support healthier outcomes for all families in our communities.

As we look ahead, we are excited to continue this journey with each of you. The momentum we have built together provides a strong foundation for future success, and we remain committed to fostering collaboration, innovation, and community engagement in all that we do.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to this coalition and to the mothers, children, and families we serve. Together, we are creating meaningful change and building healthier, stronger communities for generations to come.

**Dr. Maria Montoro Edwards**

*President & CEO*

*Maternal and Family Health Services*



# Northeast Regional Maternal Health Coalition Goals

**The Northeast Regional Maternal Health Coalition (NRMHC)**, led by Maternal and Family Health Services, is a community-driven initiative working to improve maternal health outcomes across 14 counties in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The coalition brings together healthcare providers, community-based organizations, public health partners, and individuals with lived experience to address gaps in care and strengthen regional systems.

Grounded in community engagement and data-informed planning, NRMHC focuses on translating identified needs into practical, coordinated solutions. A key focus of the coalition is fostering collective impact and collaboration, ensuring partners across sectors are working together—rather than in silos—to create meaningful, sustainable improvements in maternal health. The NRMHC is committed to improving maternal health through the following goals:

- Reduce maternal mortality and morbidity using CDC and PA MMRC recommendations.
- Advance equity across racial, socioeconomic, and geographic lines.
- Strengthen maternal health infrastructure through trauma-informed care and through workforce development.
- Advocate for key policy changes, including extended postpartum Medicaid coverage.
- Expand access to prenatal, postpartum, behavioral health, and SUD services.

## PRIORITY AREAS

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

Improving clinical protocols and patient education to prevent maternal mortality.

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

Integrating mental health and SUD services into maternal care and reducing stigma.

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

Addressing disparities, injustice, transportation challenges, and financial barriers.

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

Expanding access in underserved rural areas.

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

Building a culturally competent maternal health workforce.



# Conference Speakers



## **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 as the Co-Chair of the Perinatal Action Collaborative, member of 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.



## **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.



## **Dr. Ritika Baweja**

*Associate Professor, Penn State Health*

**Dr. Ritika Baweja** is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health and Obstetrics and Gynecology at Penn State Health. She serves as the medical director of the Reproductive and Behavioral Health Program and the Pennsylvania Perinatal Behavioral Health Consultation and Access Program (Perinatal TiPS program).

## **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. 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.



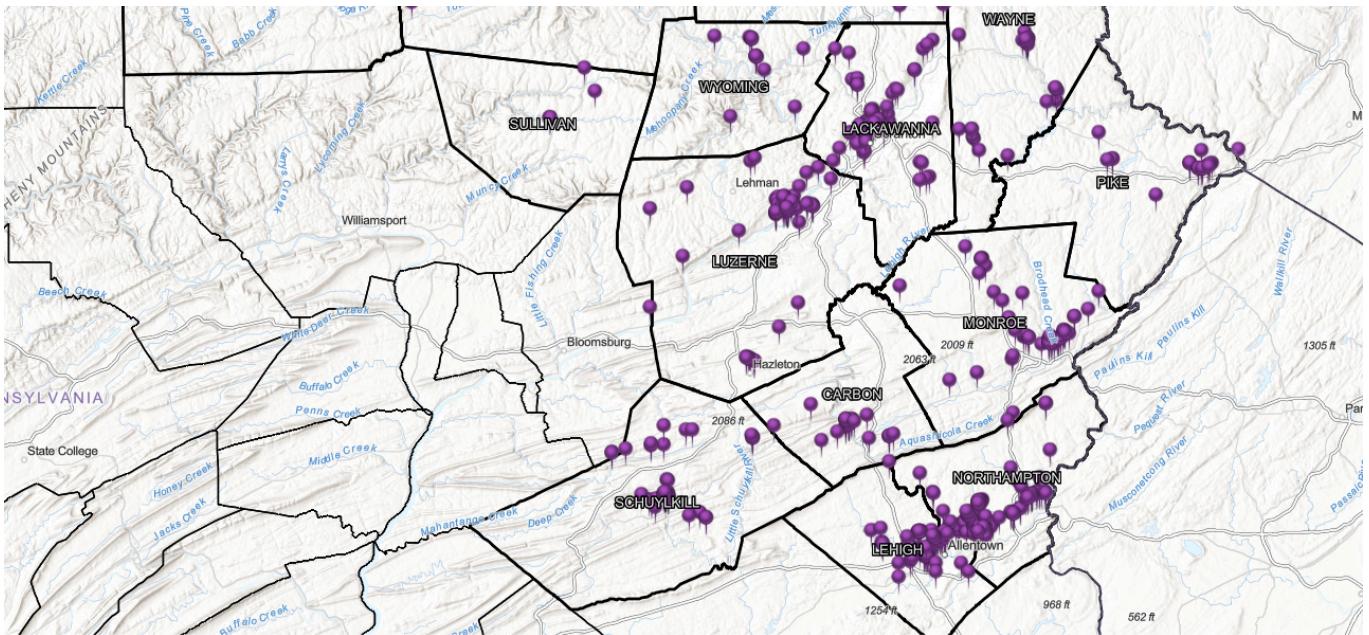
## **Marc Rabin, M.D.**

*OB-GYN, Commonwealth Health & Medical Director, MFHS*

**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.



# Resources



## ASSET MAP

The **Northeast Regional Maternal Health Coalition Asset Map** is an interactive tool that allows coalition members to explore regional maternal health assets according to categories that align with the coalition's priority areas. These categories include doulas, midwives, WIC providers, birthing facilities, OB-GYN providers, lactation consultants, substance abuse and behavioral health care providers, and home visiting services. The map is available online.



Scan to view the Asset Map or visit [mfhs.org/rmhc](https://mfhs.org/rmhc) for the link.



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

## DIGITAL RESOURCES

All resources and presentations from the seminar are available to view and download online at [mfhs.org/rmhc](https://mfhs.org/rmhc), including:

- Healthy Moms, Vibrant Futures: Pennsylvania's Maternal Health Strategic Action Plan for 2025
- 2025 Pennsylvania Maternal Mortality Review Annual Report
- Maternal Mortality Review 2022 Data Snapshot

# Thank you to our coalition members!

## Priority Team 1: Access to High Quality Care

Lisa Bailey Davis  
Kelly Ranieli  
Rosanne Garzarella  
Anne Gober  
Donna Manglaviti  
Gina Nichols  
Jennifer Sutton  
Jessica Enriquez  
Laura Harris  
Lisa Savero-Mooney  
Reabel Calubayan  
Robert M. Carpenter  
Trish Tashjian  
Alisha Mack Graham  
♥ Amanda Flicker  
Kevin Edwards  
Kim Warunek  
Alaysia Heck  
Margaret Hartmann  
Michelle Weitzmann  
Ericka Thaxton  
Melissa Yarney  
Debra Ellsworth  
Grace Young  
♥ London McPhatter

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

♥ Maria Kolcharno - Chair  
Autumn Drury  
Barbara E Durkin  
Akaila Wilson  
Katy Aulenbach  
Rebecca Dominguez , MS  
Sarah Airgood  
Teya Heller  
Michele Capasso  
Katrina Wagnier Ambrosy  
Katie Spencer  
Jewelina Albert  
Emely De Jesus Reyes  
Elizabeth King  
Alyssa Bufano  
♥ Tristan Groover  
♥ Jamianette Haddock  
Tabitha Klemens  
Raine Race  
Yuri Harden

## Priority Team 3: Addressing Social Determinants of Health

♥ ◌ Cindy Kennedy  
Maria Cimini-Bello  
Alyssa Savitski  
Angela M Reeves  
Daurice Holly  
Dawn Kolbicka  
Keila Liz Brown  
Laurinda Guarriello  
Meghan Gagorik  
Sabrina Hannon  
Deanna DiGiampaolo  
Christine Lee  
Angela Abru  
◌ Larisa Kuehn  
◌ Claudia Streets  
Nakiyah Williams  
Alaysia Heck  
Alexis Davis  
Christine Rodriguez  
Rebekah Ortiz  
◌ Kristen Owens

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

♥ ◌ Terri McCloskey  
Ann Marie Jennings  
Carolyn Moyer  
Alisha Myers  
Cathy Franko  
Crystal Kotlowski  
Lisa K Wilcox  
Melissa J Sentiff  
Brianna Thomas  
Cynthia Pruss  
Heather Jendrek  
◌ Linda Flores  
Melissa Correa  
Oneikca Williamson  
Thessaly caballero  
◌ Wendy White  
Aliyah Habeeb  
Alyssa Chang  
Claire Malecot  
Marissa Mohammed  
Yovanka Baez  
Dora Tsiattalos

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

♥ ◌ Lia Richards-Palmiter  
Ann M. Jones  
Cathy Fitzpatrick  
Rebecca Kenderes  
◌ Bryttani VanValkenburg  
◌ Julianne Hogan  
◌ Jennifer Wynn  
◌ Rachna Saxena  
Nail Aracena  
Imani Bradford  
Tammy Swetter  
Iyanna Rosado  
Philip Gelso  
Amanda Oertner  
Jenny Hetro  
Juliana Rodriguez  
Zamantha Colon  
Tanya Chapel  
◌ Kelly O'Brien  
Debra Youngfelt

## Become a Member

The NRMHC currently has 105+ total members representing maternal health professionals, hospital systems, insurance companies, educators, policymakers, and community leaders.

Interested in participating?

Send an email to London, Maternal Health Coalition Project Coordinator, to get involved: [lmcpfatter@mfhs.org](mailto:lmcpfatter@mfhs.org)

# Looking Ahead

As the Northeast Regional Maternal Health Coalition continues to move from planning into action, the upcoming year will focus on expanding implementation efforts, strengthening partnerships, and bringing new opportunities to coalition members and communities across the region.

## Mini-Grant Program Expansion

Building on the success of our initial round, NRMHC will launch a new Request for Proposals (RFP) for mini-grants up to \$5,000 beginning July 1, 2026, with submissions due July 31, 2026. These grants will continue to support community-driven projects that align with coalition priorities and test innovative, practical solutions to improve maternal health outcomes across the 14-county region. Applications will be available online at [mfhs.org/rmhc](https://mfhs.org/rmhc) and will be sent via email.

## NRMHC Knowledge Cafes: Connecting Knowledge to Practice

NRMHC will also introduce a new virtual learning initiative—The NRMHC Knowledge Cafes—designed to bring partners together for meaningful conversations, shared learning, and skill-building.

Launching late Summer 2026 through Winter 2027, these interactive sessions will highlight key issues impacting maternal health and provide space for collaboration across sectors. Planned topics include:

- **Substance Use and Vaping:** Understanding impacts on pregnant and postpartum individuals and opportunities for prevention and support
- **Intimate Partner Violence (IPV):** Recognizing the long-term effects on maternal and family health and strengthening response pathways
- **Oral Health and Maternal Health:** Elevating the role of dental care as a critical component of overall maternal wellness

Additional sessions will be shaped by coalition input to ensure they remain relevant, practical, and responsive to community needs.

## NRMHC Steering Committee Meeting Fall 2026

### Continuing the Work—Together

Through expanded funding opportunities, shared learning spaces, and continued collaboration, NRMHC remains committed to building momentum across the region. These upcoming efforts reflect the coalition's ongoing focus on collective impact, innovation, and sustainable change—ensuring that the work ahead continues to be driven by the voices, needs, and partnerships that define our region.



