



# A FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE CULTURAL BROKER SERVICE DELIVERY



**BLACK CHILD  
LEGACY**  
CAMPAIGN  
Uniting Families and Communities  
for a Healthy Future



**THE CENTER**  
at Sierra Health Foundation



**Health Net®**

**SACRAMENTO  
COUNTY**

January 2019

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# INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the first year of the Black Child Legacy Campaign's Cultural Broker community engagement program, with a focus on promoting greater public awareness and understanding of the depth and breadth of racial disparities in healthy pregnancy and birth outcomes for African Americans living in the Sacramento County 95823 zip code.

The Black Child Legacy Campaign is the community-driven movement to reduce African American child deaths by 10% to 20% by 2020 in Sacramento County. The Black Child Legacy Campaign is managed by The Center at Sierra Health Foundation (The Center). The Center works to promote health and racial equity in communities throughout California with local, state and national partners.

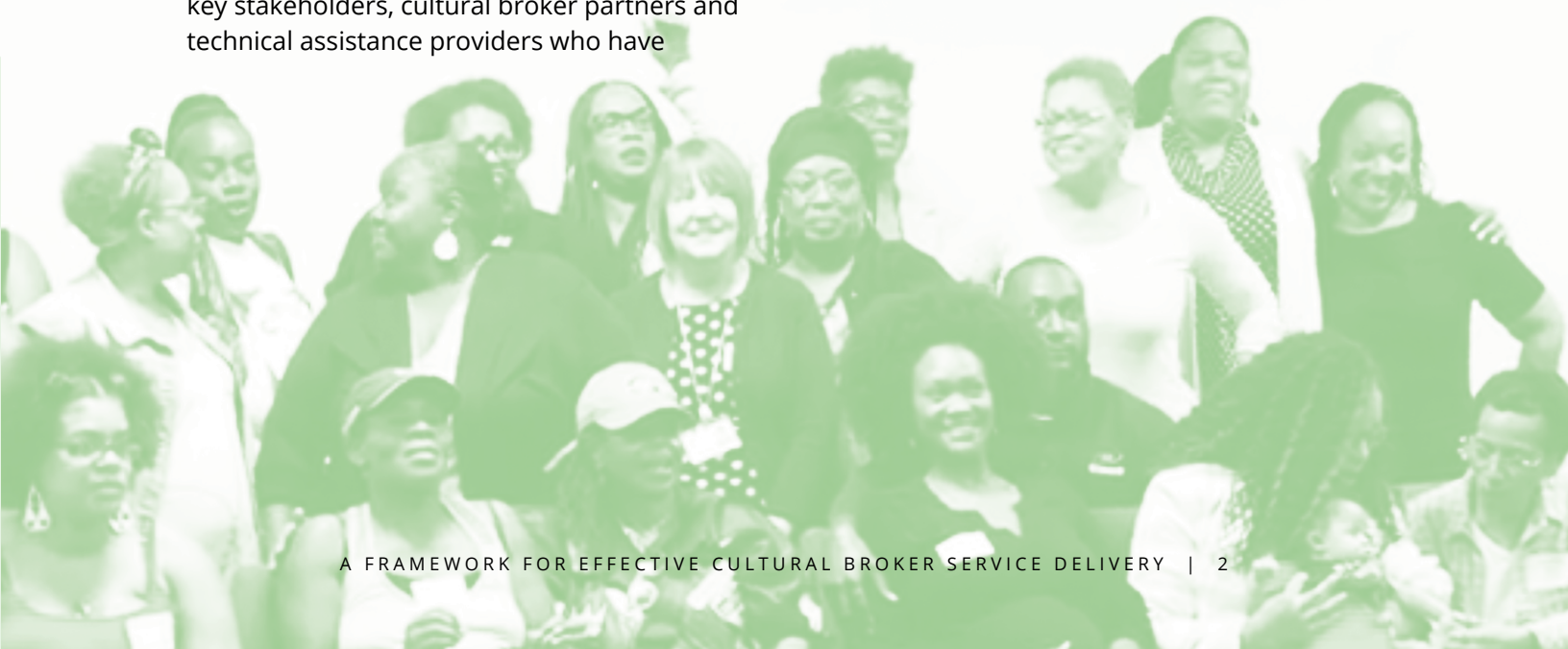
Our goal is to lay the groundwork for a sustained community-wide effort to address disparities through community-driven health equity cultural brokers, with a framework that highlights the foundational competencies and core service delivery strategies that are essential for a successful cultural broker initiative.

In this report, we look at the work of the Health Net Cultural Broker 95823 Partnership in South Sacramento, California, comprised of key stakeholders, cultural broker partners and technical assistance providers who have

created a framework that can be replicated across communities. We look at the African American perinatal cultural broker programs with a health equity lens to create a foundation of cultural broker best practices. Through this partnership, built on community expertise and best practices, we are able to see where we are making progress, as well as understand the challenges facing our community of stakeholders, providers and families.

Overall, we have much to be proud of when it comes to improved perinatal health outcomes for African American mothers and infants. However, there remains room for improvement in some areas, calling us to take action to work differently, collaboratively and in partnership with all sectors to improve perinatal health outcomes for all. We hope this report will inspire and connect the resources to enhance and build more African American cultural broker programs.

We would like to thank Health Net, Her Health First, the Greater Sacramento Urban League, WellSpace Health, South Sacramento Christian Center and the Sacramento Association of Black Social Workers for collaborating to raise awareness about the Black Child Legacy Campaign Cultural Broker Program. Together, we are improving health outcomes for African American children and families in Sacramento.



# OVERVIEW

The Black Child Legacy Campaign is the community-driven movement established by the Steering Committee on Reduction of African American Child Deaths, which is working to reduce deaths of African American children by 10% to 20% by 2020 in Sacramento County, California.

In Sacramento County, African American children die at twice the rate of any other ethnicity. The four leading causes of death are perinatal conditions, infant sleep-related deaths, child abuse and neglect, and third-party homicide.

This report puts forth a framework for effective cultural broker service delivery that defines foundational competencies and core service delivery strategies for cultural brokers primarily serving women and children who are seeking maternal and infant health care. This framework will serve as a resource for professional development and growth for cultural brokers, and includes recommendations for replication in other communities on how to create, implement and evaluate such community partnerships.

## TARGET AUDIENCE

This report is intended to support the advancement of cultural brokers who work with families seeking and receiving pre- and post-natal care. Those who engage with cultural brokers may be a part of diverse groups, including:

- Community-based organizations working to connect women to care, serving families and focused on maternal and infant health;
- County agencies that serve women, children and families;
- Committees and advocacy groups working on behalf of women, children and families;
- Community members wishing to serve as trusted messengers within their neighborhoods;
- Health care leaders who are providing services to women, children and families; and
- Policymakers.

## PARTNERS

Led by The Center at Sierra Health Foundation, this work was developed in partnership with Health Net and key partners, including:

- Her Health First (formerly the Center on Community Health and Well-being)
- Greater Sacramento Urban League
- Sacramento Association of Black Social Workers
- South Sacramento Christian Center
- WellSpace Health

### CULTURAL BROKER FOUNDATION COMPETENCIES

Knowledge  
Cultural Awareness and Competency  
Interpersonal Skills and Professionalism

### CULTURAL BROKER SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGIES

Quality Practice  
Systems Building and Policies  
Community Engagement

# BACKGROUND

## **The Black Child Legacy Campaign and the Steering Committee on Reduction of African American Child Deaths**

Social, economic and environmental factors have a profound influence on the health and well-being of children and their families. Disadvantages seen in these social determinants of health are closely linked with disparities in health and mortality among individuals and populations. Poverty, education and living conditions, as well as risk factors, such as stress, are all an important piece of the puzzle in addressing disproportional African American child deaths. The focus of reduction of African American child deaths is on infant mortality, which is defined as the number of babies that die before their first birthday. The infant mortality rate is expressed as the number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births. African American children accounted for 22% (816) of child deaths, while being only 12% of the child population in Sacramento County.

In 2013, a Sacramento County Blue-Ribbon Commission report identified a 20-year trend of African American children dying at disproportionate rates compared to all other racial groups. The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors established the Steering Committee on Reduction of African American Child Deaths to implement a plan to reduce African American child deaths by 2020. The report identified four causes of death that have the most disproportionate impact on African American children in Sacramento County. Those causes

are infant sleep-related deaths, perinatal conditions, child abuse and neglect (CAN) homicides, and third-party homicides. It also highlighted the neighborhoods with the most disproportionate number of African American child deaths in the county.

Following an intensive community process led by The Center and driven by core values of collaboration, community engagement, commitment, accountability, innovation, sustainability and service, the Steering Committee took up the charge to change this trajectory through a strategy that builds community efficacy and power to leverage their assets to effect change. The Steering Committee created a strategic plan in March 2015, *African American Children Matter: What We Must Do Now*, outlining the following five priority strategies to transform public systems and foster meaningful community engagement:

- Advocacy and Policy
- Equitable Investment and Systematic Impact
- Coordinated Systems of Support
- Data-driven Accountability and Collective Impact
- Communications and Information Systems

A key strategy in the plans to integrate community engagement has been established through a coordinated system of support and the creation of Community Incubator Leads (CIL) – community-based organizations located in target neighborhoods.





## **The Evolution of Prenatal Cultural Broker Programs in Sacramento County**

An effort to engage communities, to build and strengthen community infrastructure, and to utilize a culturally client-centered approach that engages individuals where they are with trusted advisors guiding them is needed to best serve mothers and families. In Sacramento County, these individuals are called cultural brokers. With funding provided by Health Net, The Center at Sierra Health Foundation engaged local providers presently providing cultural broker programs in the 95823 zip code, which is plagued by a range of social issues involving health care, mental health, juvenile justice, homelessness, food insecurity, child welfare and education. The pilot program, Health Net Cultural Broker 95823 Partnership, focused its effort on the communities of Meadowview and Valley Hi. This zip code is one of seven targeted neighborhoods of the Black Child Legacy Campaign that has a large disparity in African American child deaths. The aim of this pilot program was to develop a thoughtful participatory learning-in-action collaborative, whereby partners link cultural broker support activities and resources with one another to promote innovative, culturally relevant strategies that deepen community health connections. The specific goals were to:

- 1. Identify service delivery strategies and best practices for cultural broker programs in addressing the reduction of African American child deaths**, including goal-setting, organizing, service synchronicity and mobilizing action around critical issues.
- 2. Understand the foundational competencies for cultural brokers**, including developing tools and a cultural broker curriculum to address the identified needs.
- 3. Provide policy guidance and recommendations for community, local and state leaders**, particularly with a focus on areas of high incidence of African American child deaths.

In Sacramento County, cultural broker programs also are supported by First 5 Sacramento and the Department of Child, Family and Adult Services. First 5 Sacramento contracts with two service providers, Her Health First (formerly the Center for Community Health and Well Being) and WellSpace Health, to provide culturally relevant outreach, education and one-to-one support to pregnant African American women who live in high-risk neighborhoods. These service providers define cultural brokers as African American women who are trained to support healthy pregnancies by providing education, linkages to medical and social services, and assisting mothers in preparing for the birth of their child. Additionally, the Department of Child, Family and Adult Services, through Child Protective Services, operates a cultural broker program focused on child welfare, with cultural brokers providing culturally relevant system navigation to families.

## **Cultural Brokers as Agents of Change: Historical Context**

Cultural brokers, in this context, promote family engagement and advocate to improve the relationship between mothers and mothers-to-be and community systems of support. Anthropologists coined the term “cultural broker” based on observations of negotiators or intermediaries between colonizers and native members of the communities or regions they occupied. The need for a “broker” is based on the belief that conflict arises between the values and beliefs of two opposing groups. The conflict impedes communication and mutual understanding, often leading to breakdowns in the interactions between the two groups. The result of the breakdowns leads to the reduced access and/or utilization of important services.

According to Jezewski (1995) “the theoretical definition of culture brokering...is the act of bridging, linking, or mediating between groups or persons of differing cultural systems for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing change,” (p. 20). Members of marginalized communities can benefit from cultural broker programs by helping

them gain access to and increase utilization of social, health, educational and other vital services that are often cost prohibitive, which can lead to low utilization. “African American families’ distrust of the child welfare system stems from their perception that the system is unresponsive to their needs and racially biased against them,” (GAO, 2007). Cultural brokers have deep connections within the marginalized communities and have garnered the status as trusted leaders of the community. Their knowledge and

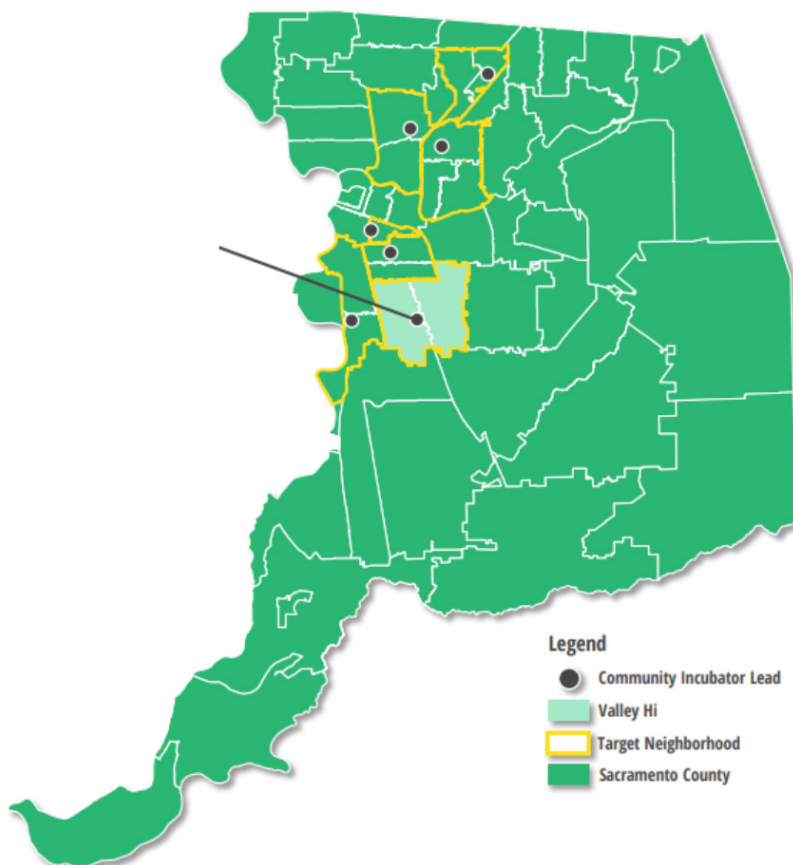
connections within the mainstream culture give cultural brokers the necessary positioning to navigate back and forth between both communities with influence.

In Sacramento County, cultural brokers have been engaging communities for years, without a title or recognition of their work. They build awareness and understanding of cultural aspects of diverse communities by tailoring their approach to the unique needs of the community.

## The 95823 Zip Code Focus Area

The focus of the Health Net Cultural Broker 95823 Partnership is specifically on the Valley Hi neighborhood of South Sacramento.

95823-95828 Data



### AFRICAN AMERICAN POPULATION IN SACRAMENTO COUNTY | 2014

107,446	10% of Adults 18+ years
38,790	11% of All Children and Youth 0-17 years
9,712	10% of Children 0-4 years
10,845	11% of Children 5-9 years
10,747	11% of Youth 10-14 years
7,486	11% of Youth 15-17 years

### AFRICAN AMERICAN POPULATION LOCATED IN ZIP CODE IN SACRAMENTO COUNTY | 2017

**2014 Population:** 181,677 residents  
(32,900 African American Residents – 18%)  
**2014 Children and Youth Population:**  
73,520 Children and Youth  
(14,405 African American Children and Youth – 20%)

**2014 Number of Births:** 2,298 Births  
(433 African American Births – 19%)

In the Child Death Review Team 20-year report covering 1990-2009, it was reported that in Valley Hi and Meadowview, the number of African American perinatal deaths was 116.

# ZIP CODES 95823 AND 95828:

## VALLEY HI BLACK CHILD LEGACY CAMPAIGN PROFILE

### POPULATION 2014

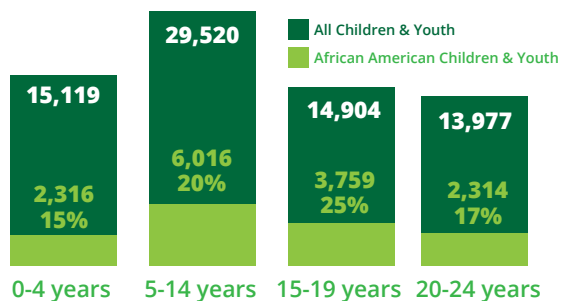
## 181,677 RESIDENTS

32,900 African American Residents (18%)

### CHILDREN & YOUTH 2014

## 73,520 CHILDREN & YOUTH

14,405 African American Children & Youth (20%)



### NUMBER OF BIRTHS 2014

## 2,298 BIRTHS

433 African American Births (19%)

### TOP 3 BIRTH HOSPITALS 2014

## TOP 3 HOSPITALS FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN BABIES

(% of all African American Births in this neighborhood)

**SUTTER MEDICAL CENTER 25%**  
**KAISER SOUTH 25%**  
**METHODIST 25%**

### HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE 2014

Children 0-5 years **96%**

Children 6-17 years **92%**

Youth 18-24 years **68%**

### SCHOOLS ATTENDED BY TARGETED YOUTH 2014-15

Fern Bacon Middle School	Luther Burbank High School
James Rutter Middle School	Monterey Trail High School
Samuel Jackman Middle School	Rio Cazadero High School
Calvine High School	Valley High School
Florin High School	William Daylor High School
Las Flores High School	

### GRADUATION RATE 2014-15

#### Florin High School\*

**90% of AA Students**

94% of students of all other ethnicities

#### Luther Burbank High School\*

**73% of AA Students**

89% of students of all other ethnicities

#### Monterey Trail School\*

**91% of AA Students**

96% of students of all other ethnicities

#### Valley High School\*

**80% of AA Students**

91% of students of all other ethnicities

\* CIL identified high school in which most targeted youth attend

### HOUSING 2014

## 57,521 NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING UNITS

**45% of units are renter-occupied**

**57% of renters pay 35% or more of household income**

**32% of residents recently moved**

**8% of residents are without a vehicle in household**



# MOTHER & INFANT HEALTH

## DELIVERY COSTS: BIRTHS PAID BY MEDI-CAL 2014

Births paid by Medi-Cal is used as a proxy for low-income mothers.



## PRENATAL CARE: INITIATED AFTER 1ST TRIMESTER 2014

Mothers are advised to start prenatal care during their 1st trimester of pregnancy. Late entry into care may pose increased health risks to pregnant mothers and their babies.



## PRE-TERM BIRTHS: BIRTHS OCCURRED BEFORE 37 WEEKS OF PREGNANCY 2014

Pre-term birth is the leading cause of newborn death and may contribute to long-term disabilities for infants.



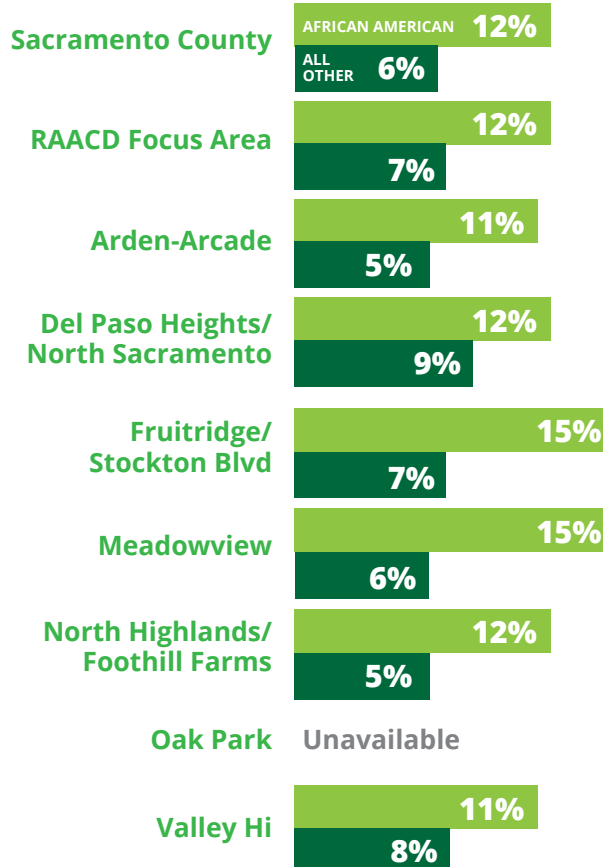
## LOW-BIRTHWEIGHT BIRTHS: BIRTH-WEIGHT LESS THAN 5LBS. 8OZ. 2014

Infants born below 5 pounds 8 ounces can be due to preterm birth or other pregnancy risk factors.



## LOW BIRTHWEIGHT BIRTHS (<5LBS 8OZ) 2014

Percent of all **African American & All Other** Births



# FOCUS

The purpose of the Black Child Legacy Campaign and Health Net Cultural Broker 95823 Partnership is to ensure that health care leaders and community stakeholders embrace high quality perinatal African American cultural broker programs as essential to the overall health (physical, social and emotional) of mothers and infants who need it most.

To develop this framework, we utilized a collaborative process to determine a theory of change, built out intended outcomes and the strategies and competencies to meet those outcomes, and developed recommendations for further work.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Identifying key organizations that are currently providing services in the 95823 zip code was one of the initial steps of the Health Net Cultural Broker 95823 Partnership. This project was a collaboration of key partners who demonstrate expertise in cultural broker services, as well as service providers working within the effort to reduce African American child deaths with direct connection to the community.

**Her Health First** provided overall coordination of cultural brokers, including managing cultural broker assignments, overseeing case deployment and assess and document activities. Her Health First's mission is to improve health equity by providing support to women in Sacramento County. The organization envisions a community in which all women have full and equal access to opportunities leading to the highest level of health possible.

**Greater Sacramento Urban League** provided training space and connections to workforce development strategies. The mission of the Greater Sacramento Urban League is to help enhance education, job development and management skills for people in the Sacramento region.

**WellSpace Health** assisted in connecting the WellSpace/First 5 Sacramento Cultural Broker Program to the Black Child Legacy Campaign and Health Net 95823 Cultural Broker Partnership, including connection to existing cultural brokers. WellSpace Health provides care and support to individuals and families throughout Sacramento, offering a full range of quality medical care, dental care for children and adolescents, mental health and behavior health and behavioral health services to underserved populations. WellSpace Health works within the community it serves.

**Sacramento Association of Black Social Workers** provided training and professional development to cultural brokers in culturally responsive practices and triaged family care. The Sacramento Association of Black Social Workers provides a structure and forum through which Black social workers and those in related fields can exchange ideas, offer services and develop programs in the interest of the Black community. The Sacramento Association of Black Social Workers is a private, professional, culturally



oriented service organization comprised of social workers and community workers in related fields of human services who make their skills available to individuals, groups and agencies for the alleviation of the numerous problems confronting the Black community.

**South Sacramento Christian Center**, as the Valley Hi Community Incubator Lead for the Black Child Legacy Campaign, provided a connection to the community, including outreach to residents of 95823. Additionally, the South Sacramento

Christian Center contributed to the coordination of interested members of the community who wish to receive cultural broker training. South Sacramento Christian Center has 29 years of experience in serving the Sacramento community with a targeted focus on South Sacramento. Its mission is to build a strong church, and empower the community through education and activities that promote unity and wholeness for spirit, soul and body. It believes that true ministry goes beyond the walls of the church and reaches to transform and rebuild its community.

## COLLABORATIVE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLES	CULTURAL BROKER SERVICE PROVIDER	TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND OUTREACH	COORDINATION
Her Health First	X			X
Greater Sacramento Urban League		X		
WellSpace Health	X			
Sacramento Association of Black Social Workers		X		
South Sacramento Christian Center			X	X





# THE CENTER AT SIERRA HEALTH FOUNDATION: BLACK CHILD LEGACY CAMPAIGN AND HEALTH NET CULTURAL BROKER 95823 PARTNERSHIP

## THEORY OF CHANGE OVERVIEW

**ULTIMATE IMPACT:** In Sacramento County, quality perinatal African American cultural broker programs are an indispensable and integral part of a quality health care system that ensures that all expecting mothers and infants have the opportunity for culturally relevant health equity services.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the Black Child Legacy Campaign and Health Net Cultural Broker 95823 Partnership is to ensure that health care leaders and community stakeholders embrace high quality perinatal African American cultural broker programs as essential to the overall health (physical, social and emotional) of mothers and infants that need it most.

### CHALLENGES

In Sacramento County, perinatal African American cultural broker programs are not aligned to each other for ultimate impact.

Inefficient and inflexible resources to support perinatal African American cultural broker programs

Low prioritization of perinatal African American cultural broker programs by major local health systems

Gap in recruiting and training perinatal African American cultural broker workforce to meet Sacramento's growing needs

### STRATEGIES

#### Quality Practice:

- Develop sustainable, quality perinatal African American cultural broker demonstration initiative
- Support improvement of quality of perinatal African American cultural broker programs

#### Systems Building/Policy:

- Maintain a vital and robust platform for key stakeholders for perinatal African American cultural broker programs through a technical assistance (TA) system
- Implement a "train the trainers" model for TA to expand perinatal African American cultural broker programs
- Partner with perinatal African American cultural broker programs to integrate work-force development

#### Community Engagement:

- Develop effective common messages that promote perinatal African American cultural broker programs in Sacramento County
- Collaborate with healthcare, philanthropy, business, local government, and other perinatal African American cultural broker programs
- Build demand for perinatal African American cultural broker programs
- Build new champions to support perinatal African American cultural broker programs

### TARGET AUDIENCE

- African American Mothers (targeted but universal)
- Community-Based Organizations
- County Agencies
- Community Members
- Committees and Advocacy Groups
- Healthcare Leaders
- Policymakers

### OUTCOMES

#### Quality Practice:

- Increased engagement in Sacramento County perinatal African American cultural broker programs
- Improved integration of perinatal African American cultural broker programs and local health systems
- Increased agreement between perinatal African American cultural broker programs on quality professional development framework

#### Systems Building/Policy:

- Strengthened integration between perinatal African American cultural broker programs and professional development
- Increased demand for perinatal African American cultural broker programs
- Increased engagement and commitment to perinatal African American cultural broker workforce

#### Community Engagement:

- Strengthened support base for African American cultural broker workforce

# KEY STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING FRAMEWORK

## COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

- A series of meetings
- Cultural broker assessment
- Logic model developed to define the parameters of the Black Child Legacy Campaign and Health Net Cultural Broker 95823 Partnership. This provided objectives and timelines for implementing the program.

## COMMUNITY ACTION AND CHANGE

- [Listening session](#)
- Release of grants
- Collaboration based on communication

## COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND OUTCOMES

- Training meetings
- Curriculum development
- Evaluation

## ADAPTATION, RENEWAL AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION

- Webinar
- Policy brief
- Curriculum implementation

## FRAMEWORK

This framework is built on three foundational competencies and three core strategies for service delivery.

### Foundational Competencies

Knowledge  
Cultural Awareness and Competency  
Interpersonal Skills and Professionalism

### Cultural Broker Service Delivery Strategies

Quality Practice  
Systems Building and Policies  
Community Engagement

# FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES

## KNOWLEDGE

### **African American Infant and Maternal Health**

- Recognizes the components of a successful health program
- Understands the health needs of mothers and infants
- Understands the health needs unique to African Americans
- Understands pregnancy from conception through the first year of life
- Understands the emotional, mental and physical health needs of mothers

### **Service Delivery Systems and Providers in Sacramento County**

- Awareness of providers within Sacramento County, including grassroots agencies, community-based organizations and government agencies
- Awareness of how government agency systems operate and function
- Awareness of how medical systems operate and function
- Ability to navigate service delivery systems through multiple providers

### **Advocacy**

- Understands key strategies to advocate for individuals and systems change
- Knowledgeable on how to support community leaders in advocacy efforts
- Understands the processes of working within systems and how to create change
- Understands methods for communicating advocacy strategies



# FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES

## CULTURAL AWARENESS AND COMPETENCY

### Community

- Knowledgeable about oneself (and factors that shape world views)
- Informed about African American community in Sacramento County
- Understands the norms of this community
- Informed about social and diversity issues

### Families

- Understands how to talk to and relate to families, including non-traditional caretakers
- Understands different family dynamics and communication strategies
- Knowledgeable about services offered to families within Sacramento County
- Able to communicate clearly and across mediums to meet family needs



# FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES

## INTERPERSONAL SKILLS AND PROFESSIONALISM

### Relationship Building

- Listens attentively for an open and honest exchange
- Respects the audience, their knowledge and expertise
- Is authentic
- Establishes trust and follows through

### Effective Communication

- Exhibits various communication styles that meet the need of your audience
- Is able to communicate across mediums
- Is able to communicate clearly
- Is able to “Code Switch” or select your language to contextualize your message

### Asset-Based Collaboration

- Recognizes assets in partners
- Identifies and connects people based on their assets
- Understands collaboration best practices

### Model Ethical and Professional Behavior and Presentation

- Credits people, materials and research accurately
- Has integrity
- Is transparent in services

### Responsible and Accountable

- Is clear and transparent about your work, processes and communication
- Follows through
- Is conscious of the needs of families and partners
- Is timely

# CULTURAL BROKER SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGIES

## QUALITY PRACTICE

Quality practice as a key service delivery strategy will lead to an increased engagement in cultural broker programs, improved integration of perinatal African American cultural broker programs and local health systems, and increased agreement between these programs on a quality professional development framework.

**Utilizing the foundational competencies for cultural brokers, Sacramento County can:**

**Develop a sustainable, quality perinatal African American cultural broker initiative**

- Curriculum building creates cohesion among cultural broker programs and best practices for service delivery
- Cultural broker programs can work in collaboration, utilizing core principals and curriculum
- With a standard curriculum and training, cultural brokers have broader reach, support and maximize efforts

**Support improvement of quality of perinatal African American cultural broker programs**

- In partnership, all cultural broker programs can continually be improved
- Through the establishment of foundational competencies and curriculum, African American cultural broker programs will increase their capacity to provide service delivery





# CULTURAL BROKER SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGIES

## SYSTEMS BUILDING AND POLICIES

Systems building and development of policies will lead to a strengthened integration between perinatal African American cultural broker programs and professional development, increased demand for perinatal African American cultural broker programs, and increased engagement and commitment to the perinatal African American cultural broker workforce.

### **Strategies for systems building and development of policies include:**

#### **Maintain a vital and robust platform for key stakeholders for perinatal African American cultural broker programs through a technical assistance system**

- Technical assistance will allow for continued integration, expanded learning and consistent quality improvement
- Key stakeholders will be able to access technical assistance, expand on foundational competencies and better serve communities
- Policies and procedures that include technical assistance can be higher performing

#### **Implement a “train the trainers” model for technical assistance to expand perinatal African American cultural broker programs**

- Train the trainers model creates ongoing opportunities for technical assistance and shared knowledge among stakeholders
- Train the trainers model creates long-lasting impact, enhanced engagement and improved leadership
- Train the trainers model will lead to experienced trainers who have both practical and instructional skills

#### **Partner with perinatal African American cultural broker programs to integrate workforce development**

- Cultural brokers are a key workforce, and further developed programs and trainings can provide an entry point for community members seeking employment opportunities
- Cultural broker programs can integrate workforce development opportunities to expand services, reach community, and create positive community outcomes in both health and economic opportunity

# CULTURAL BROKER SERVICE DELIVERY STRATEGIES

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement will lead to a strengthened support base for the African American cultural broker workforce, as well as increased engagement in cultural broker programs.

### Key strategies include:

**Develop effective common messages that promote perinatal African American cultural broker programs in Sacramento County**

- Broad-reaching, common messaging is essential to promote cultural broker programs
- Shared messaging will enhance collaboration

**Collaborate with health care, philanthropy, business, local government and other perinatal African American cultural broker programs**

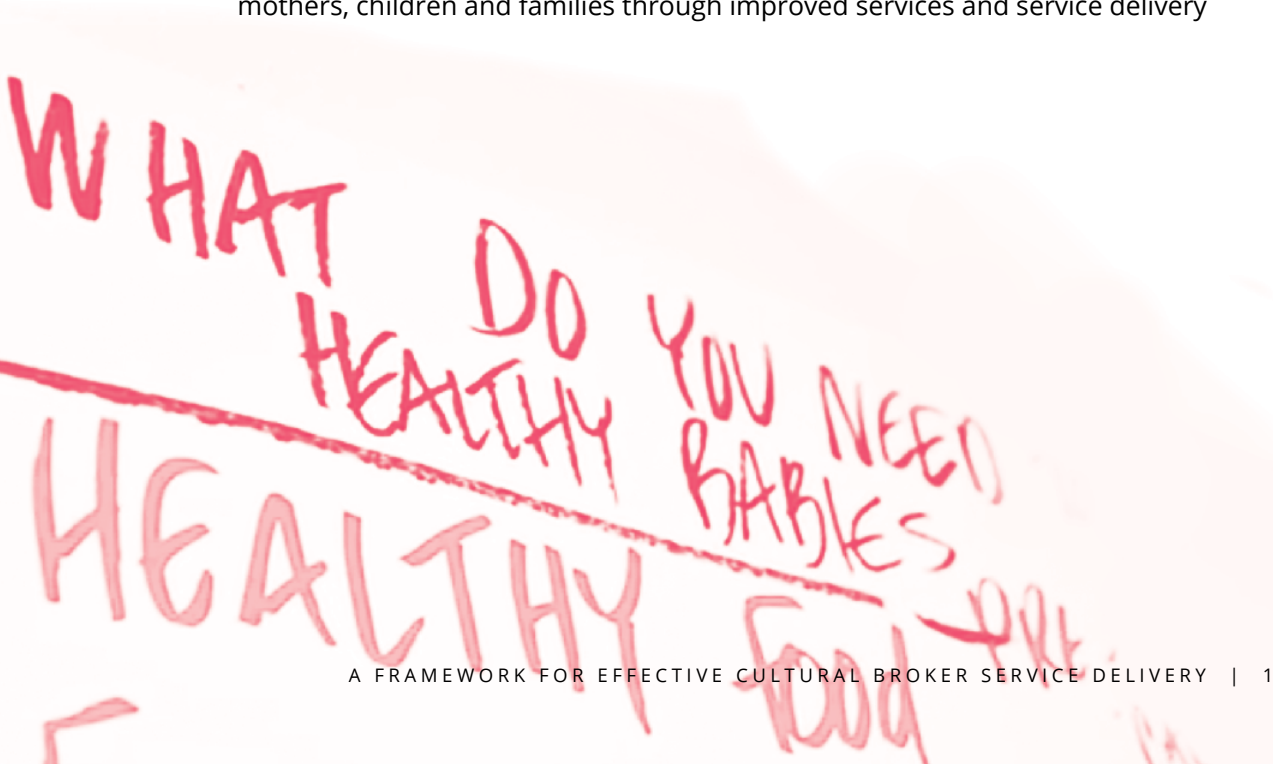
- Collaborations can lead to shared information, research and referrals for cultural broker programs
- Collaboration can build knowledge around cultural broker programs, communities, and maternal and infant health
- Collaboration can lead to increased funding, systems and policy change to better serve African American mothers, children and families

**Build demand for perinatal African American cultural broker programs**

- Community outreach is essential to reach target audiences and increase demand for programs
- Cultural broker programs can become a common part of health care services for mothers, children and families

**Build new champions to support perinatal African American cultural broker programs**

- Building new champions is essential to continually creating improved health outcomes for mothers, children and families through improved services and service delivery



# RECOMMENDATIONS

There is evidence that cultural broker programs have proven to be useful in addressing the health needs of African American mothers. The success of the Black Child Legacy Campaign and Health Net Cultural Broker 95823 Partnership is an indication that this work cannot be done in silos. By facilitating the space for collaboration, participants from various sectors were able to find creative ways to support African American mothers at all stages of their pregnancies. The findings provide justification for collaborative action to support policies that specifically focus on identifying, training and supporting cultural brokers in communities. The cultural broker training can provide community members with tools to bridge, connect and mediate between groups or persons of differing cultural backgrounds to reduce conflict and promote collaboration, and ultimately increased positive maternal and child health outcomes.

Recommendations based on this pilot project are built out of the need for collaborative measures, making systems and policy changes, and creating pathways for mothers, children and families to receive care. Recommendations include:

- **Hospital systems to increase investment to build pathways between culturally relevant services and health care.** Hospital systems have an opportunity to create full community care by building pathways between culturally relevant services, such as cultural broker programs, and health care.
- **Invest in new workforce development opportunities and career pathways, such as class certifications options at the community college level.** Create further opportunities for education, employment and training by developing cultural broker certifications in local community colleges.
- **Invest in policy development and culturally relevant community health strategies** to aid in the reduction of African American child

deaths. This type of investment requires community, city and state leaders to seek partnerships, leadership and resources from previously untapped fiscal and non-fiscal resources that are outside of any particular zip code.

- **Coordinate and implement capacity building services for cultural broker programming agencies** that include all phases of planning and implementation, such as needs assessment, program design, technical assistance, evaluation and sustainability.





- **Establish shared vision and measurement practices** at the neighborhood level that provide community buy-in and an infrastructure of support. Based on collective impact modeling, shared vision and measurement practices, facilitate commitment to implementing and sustaining cultural broker programming. Partners gather an understanding of the value of sharing data and its use as a tool to improving programming and identified community outcomes. (Turner, Merchant et. al)
- **Expand opportunities to train and educate cultural brokers** on providing advocacy and guidance to help support African American families around infant and maternal health.
- **Invest resources in building the evidence base for interventions that address African American child deaths.** There is a scarcity of scientific evidence on interventions that address African American child deaths. Practitioners need to continue to have the ability to test new ideas, conduct more rigorous program evaluation, support the replication and expansion of promising pilot programs, and commit to broad dissemination/ publication of interventions that effectively address the reduction of African American child deaths. Racial and ethnic disparities in infant mortality continue to exist. More research needs to be done to explore why these disparities exist, and how they may be eliminated through social and policy reform.



# TOOLS

## **CULTURAL BROKER TRAINING**

One goal of the Black Child Legacy Campaign and Health Net Cultural Broker 95823 Partnership was to gain a better understanding of the individual training and ongoing support of cultural brokers, including developing a curriculum to address the identified needs.

The need and desire for cultural broker training emerged from a community listening forum. The Community Broker Training Program is multi-disciplinary in nature, with a focus on preparing individuals to work within the community to advocate for, empower and guide families on how to best work with social service and community health systems.

The purpose is to provide community members with the tools to bridge the gap between services and resources available and the community that needs access to assistance.

This includes:

- Tools and training to understand African American infant and maternal health
- Tools to ensure cultural awareness when working within the community
- Tools to understand family dynamics
- Tools to understand service delivery systems throughout Sacramento County
- Tools to understand best practices for advocacy to empower the community
- Tools to ensure professional development when working within the community and for future endeavors.

The curriculum is designed to provide training to community members with a desire to ensure that African Americans are gaining access to all systems within their communities from a culturally relevant point of view. This multi-disciplinary design is delivered in the following format:

**Phase 1 Module: Cultural Awareness and Diversity**

**Phase 2 Module: Understanding of Impact on Family Dynamics**

**Phase 3 Module: Understanding and Navigating Systems**

**Phase 4 Module: Professional Development**

**Phase 5 Module: Clinical Health Component**

The cultural broker training curriculum provides community members with tools to bridge, connect and mediate between groups or persons of differing cultural backgrounds to reduce conflict and promote collaboration.

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## Reduction of African American Child Deaths Steering Committee Co-Chairs

Chet P. Hewitt, *President and CEO, The Center and Sierra Health Foundation*

Natalie Woods Andrews, *Director of Early Learning, Sacramento County Office of Education*

## SUPPORTING THIS WORK

Creating impact for effective community-led practices requires the commitment and collaboration of multiple agencies. This framework was designed with many partners, including the Greater Sacramento Urban League, Health Net, Sacramento Association of Black Social Workers, South Sacramento Christian Center, The Pivotal Group and WellSpace Health. Our goal is that it empowers our community and improves practices that create health equity in our most vulnerable neighborhoods.



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