

“Building Bridges for Birth Equity: Partnering for Respectful and Inclusive Care”

*ILPQC Annual Conference 2025
– Breakout Session Proposal
Patient, Family & Community
Partners Breakout Session*

Welcome & Introductions

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Session Overview

This breakout session will explore collaborative strategies to strengthen partnerships between patients, families, hospitals, and community-based organizations to improve perinatal outcomes.

Participants will learn about Illinois' new doula integration legislation, patient partner engagement, and community collaboration models that center respectful care and birth equity.

The session includes:

- A presentation (30 minutes) introducing key concepts and legislation
- An interactive “Family Feud” learning game (45 minutes) that reinforces the material and fosters teamwork among participants



Understanding Patient, Family, and Community Engagement

DEFINITION AND IMPORTANCE OF
PATIENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT
IN HOSPITAL - BASED QI WORK

- HOW COMMUNITY AND PATIENT
VOICES DRIVE SUSTAINABLE
IMPROVEMENTS

- BENEFITS : CULTURAL RELEVANCE,
TRUST - BUILDING, IMPROVED MATERNAL
HEALTH OUTCOMES

Doula Integration in Hospital Settings (Effective January 2026)



A. Legislative Background

- Illinois passed legislation requiring all hospitals to implement doula-friendly policies by January 2026.
- Hospitals must create systems that support doulas as integral members of the birth team.

B. Core Principles of Doula Integration

- Teamwork & Collaboration:
 - o Doulas partner with clinicians and nurses to promote a positive birth experience.
 - o Questions from doulas are meant to clarify and advocate for patient well being.
 - o Focus remains on the client's long-term physical and mental health outcomes.
 - o Doulas help reintroduce the joy and humanity of birth.

Doula Integration in Hospital Settings

Continued (Effective January 2026)

- **Professional Etiquette &**

- Boundaries:**

- o Doulas maintain professional, emotional, and relational boundaries.
- o Must dress appropriately and wear visible identification.
- o Follow hospital policies for visiting hours (Labor: unrestricted; Postpartum unrestricted)



Doula Integration in Hospital Settings Continued (Effective January 2026)

C. IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR HOSPITALS:

1. INCLUDE DOULAS IN CARE PLANNING MEETINGS AND UNIT ORIENTATION.
2. CREATE HOSPITAL CREDENTIALING OR REGISTRATION PROCESSES FOR DOULAS.
3. OFFER INTERDISCIPLINARY TRAINING ON TEAMWORK, COMMUNICATION, AND CULTURAL HUMILITY.
4. PROVIDE PHYSICAL SPACE FOR DOULA SUPPORT DURING LABOR AND POSTPARTUM CARE.
5. DEVELOP DOCUMENTATION PROCEDURES FOR DOULA INVOLVEMENT IN PATIENT CHARTS.

Partnering with Community Organizations

How to identify and engage local community partners (douglas, CHWs, advocacy groups, etc.)

- Mutual benefits: improved trust, resource sharing, and patient-centered care
- Example: The Doula Lab's collaboration with hospitals to normalize community presence in clinical spaces (SSM, BJC, St. Elizabeth Hospital)

Respectful and Inclusive Maternity Care

- Elements of respectful care:
dignity, informed choice, cultural safety, and empathy
- Addressing barriers such as bias, miscommunication,
and lack of representation
- Practical strategies:
 - Implement patient feedback systems
 - Conduct bias and trauma-informed care training
 - Recognize and celebrate providers demonstrating
respectful care



Perinatal Mental Health and Partner Support

- Recognizing emotional health as a core component of maternal care
- Supporting both birthing people and their partners during the perinatal period
- Building referral networks between hospitals and community mental health resources

Family Feud

Family Feud Game: “Building Bridges for Birth Equity”

A Fun Session for Patients and Healthcare Professionals to Collaborate

Get ready for an exciting and interactive session! We'll engage patient partners and healthcare professionals in a playful environment to enhance teamwork and communication. Our agenda includes valuable discussions and activities, culminating in a lively Family Feud game that reinforces our key messages about collaboration in healthcare. Two mixed teams, each with community partners, hospital staff, and stakeholders (up to 6 per team)

Your Host:

Auntie Tamela Milan-Alexander
Harvey



Scoreboard Fun

Track team points and keep the energy high during the game!

A clearly designed scoreboard is essential for maintaining the flow of the Family Feud game. It allows participants to see **the progress and encourages friendly competition**. Use colorful graphics and playful elements to make this slide visually engaging, ensuring everyone stays focused and enthusiastic throughout the session.

Points:

100

75

50

25

10



Benefits of Doula Integration

Communication

Teamwork

Tools

Challenges

Ways to engage community partners

Communication

Collaboration

Tools

Environment

Respectful Care Means

Communication

Collaboration

Experience

Tools

Barriers to engagement

Communication

Collaboration

Experience

Tools

Preparing for IL's Doula -friendly Law

Communication

Collaboration

Experience

Tools

Supporting perinatal mental health

Communication

Collaboration

Experience

Tools

Making patient partners feel valued

Communication

Collaboration

Experience

Tools

Community resources for families

Communication

Collaboration

Experience

Tools

Group Reflection and Call to Action

Understand Illinois' doula integration legislation and how to operationalize it in hospital and clinic setting

- Identify actionable strategies for engaging community partners
- Recognize the principles of respectful maternity care
- Strengthen cross-sector collaboration through interactive learning