

CULTURE CARE

Connecting Black Women with Culturally Responsive Maternity Care



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PRIMARY CONTACT

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ABOUT CULTURE CARE

Culture Care is a telemedicine startup focused on connecting Black women with Black health care providers in California, New York, and Pennsylvania. The company's overall mission is to annihilate health disparities by giving Black patients options beyond what is currently available to them. By being 100% virtual and charging an average of \$50 for an appointment, Culture Care eliminates two of the major barriers to seeing a Black doctor — geographic accessibility and health insurance. As a Black woman who previously worked as an ob/gyn, Founder and CEO, Joy Cooper, MD, saw a clear need for culturally concordant care for Black patients who were otherwise being severely mistreated. These same patients warmed to her immediately and appreciated her cultural responsiveness. Culture Care came out of her desire to eliminate barriers and create more ease for Black patients to connect with Black doctors.

A CASE STUDY OF CULTURE CARE'S WORK IN CALIFORNIA

Beginning in October 2025, the Black Maternal Health Avengers project will offer two cohorts of 6-8 pregnant Black women in California access to the Culture Care prenatal and postpartum bundle, providing care during their last two trimesters and in the one year after delivery. The project leverages Culture Care's model of facilitating easy access to Black doctors for Black patients. Several systemic barriers obstruct Black women's ability to access culturally responsive care. A lack of culturally responsive care can have detrimental impacts on health outcomes, as patients might not feel comfortable sharing what they're experiencing with doctors who don't understand their cultures. The Black Maternal Health Avengers project helps to overcome barriers by creating an accessible telehealth model led by an interdisciplinary team of Black health care providers (ob/gyn, therapist, lactation specialist, and pediatrician). Over the course of pregnancy and in the one-year postpartum, this team provides culturally responsive care to mothers before and after their babies arrive. The mothers will complete monthly surveys focused on their experience of the care they receive. Culture Care will publish the data around their learning through the process to inform other health care providers seeking to offer better care to Black patients.



California Health Care Foundation

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WHY THIS FOCUS?

Culture Care's goal with the Black Maternal Health Avengers Project is to ensure that Black mothers survive to raise their children. This focus on postpartum care is informed by the fact that the majority of maternal deaths in California and nationally occur during the postpartum period.

GOALS

- Black mothers participating in Culture Care's cohorts consistently attend their postpartum visits.
- Participating mothers receive culturally responsive care.
- Black mothers receive reliable, resonant care throughout their second and third trimesters of pregnancy and during their child's first year.
- Participating mothers have a positive experience with health care, laying the foundation of positive experiences for their children.

STRATEGIES

- Provide a cohort of mothers access to Culture Care's prenatal and postpartum bundle.
- Create an accessible virtual group care model led by an interdisciplinary team of Black health care providers (ob/gyn, therapist, lactation specialist, and pediatrician).
- Gather survey data from participating mothers to increase understanding of the impact of providing culturally responsive care.
- Screen for postpartum depression.

IMPACT METRICS

- Survey responses from cohort members reporting positive experiences with care
- Increased postpartum in-person visit rate as compared to the national rate
- Increased trust in health care providers

SUPPORTED BY CHCF'S PULSE OF CHANGE INITIATIVE

In late 2023, California Health Care Foundation put out a call for projects that would improve clinical quality of care for Black Californians. Of the many community clinics, hospitals, and technology start-ups from across the state that responded to the call, CHCF awarded grants to eight organizations using a variety of strategies to create a safer, stronger, and fairer health system for Black Californians. Funded projects focus on topics ranging from culturally responsive prenatal care to hypertension management and colorectal cancer screening.



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