

## GRANT ANALYSIS FORM OPERATING & CAPITAL GRANT PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Department/Division: Health Department/Family and Community Health Branch

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### Category of Request

New Grant

Grant Continuation

Change in Previously Approved Grant

Previous Council File No. N/A

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Project/Program Title: Maternal Health Innovation Project – Paternal Child Health: Enhancing Fatherhood Servicing to Improve Birth Outcomes

Grantor Agency: WI Department of Health Services (DHS) Division of Public Health (DPH)

Grant Application Date: 7/1/2024

Anticipated Award Date: 10/1/2024

1. Description of Grant Project/Program (Include Target Locations and Populations):

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), Division of Public Health (DPH) announced the availability of funds to establish and execute Maternal Health Innovation Projects. Projects focus on promoting and executing innovation in maternal health service delivery through addressing critical gaps in direct clinical care, workforce, partnership and/or community engagement. The project goal is to increase access utilizing a holistic pregnancy care model in community settings.

Data shows us that “father involvement during pregnancy and maternal health have found that male involvement is associated with reduced odds of maternal depression, higher likelihood of maternal access to health services, more preparedness around birth and birth complications, and better maternal nutrition. Additionally, having a father present during the first prenatal ultrasound is associated with higher likelihood of full-term pregnancy. During infancy, partner support is associated with higher likelihood and longer duration of breastfeeding and associations between father-child dietary intake exist as early as 20 months of age (nih.gov). Although the data supports promotion of fatherhood engagement, it is underwhelmingly embedded into maternal child health servicing.

Given the incredible impact fathers can make in maternal and child health, we sought out a sole-source community-based non-profit provider “Melanated Daddy”, specifically the *Dad Doula University Program* that provides a truly innovative approach to building the health of the birthing community. The provider is a certified full spectrum doula, certified community health worker, and longtime trusted messenger and advocate in the City of Milwaukee. The Dad Doula program is a uniquely curated workshop designed to support families by creating space for the non-birthing parents to prepare for the journey of parenthood. Each session is designed to provide participants with a set of tools, strategies and information to be intentional about family planning and building. The program focuses on building social emotional awareness, restorative practice, co-parenting skills and family pre-natal preparation and postpartum highlights.

We plan to take a two-pronged approach with this funding – enhancing the direct services we provide to fathers/partners while developing our staff’s skillsets and capacity to genuinely, equitably and competently serve fathers/partners:

Year 1:

- Investment into Melanated Daddy’s “Dad Doula University Program” that will provide workshop cohorts for eligible fathers/partners (prioritizing those involved in our home visitation and doula programs but also open to any eligible father/partner in the City of Milwaukee). The cohorts run 2-4 weeks each with 10-15 people per group so we can have upwards of 100+ dads can access this service per year.
- Implement Fatherhood Inclusion and Support Professional Development for our home visitation and doula teams to enhance the direct services our programs provide to fathers/partners; developing our staff’s skillsets and capacity to genuinely, equitably and competently serve fathers/partners. Research shows that an array of child and family service providers encounter barriers in practice including micro (biases, colorblindness), societal (devaluation of fathers’ role), and systemic (racism, mother-centrism) (researchwithrutgers.com).

Year 2:

- Continued Dad Doula programming to fathers/partners along with the expansion of the professional development into other applicable positions in Family and Community Health (FCH) that interface with fathers/partners (i.e. WIC program staff, Outreach Specialists, etc.).

Years 3-4:

- The last two years we will continue to offer Dad Doula cohorts, but will focus grandly on quality improvement work for all involved programs around improved fatherhood engagement; developing a proof of concept for and gaining important Maternal Health Data needed to build inclusive service provision for partners/fathers for local, state and federal stakeholder consideration.

2. Relationship to City-Wide Strategic Goals and Departmental Objectives:

The City of Milwaukee has dedicated focus on providing intervention/prevention around infant mortality and its impact to City residents. There are ongoing disparities in those most impacted by infant mortality, particularly birthing people of color. The City of Milwaukee declared Racism as a Public Health crisis in 2019 and the Milwaukee Health Department's Strategic Plan incorporates an anti-racist lens throughout our practice and policies Department-wide.

In the maternal and child health space, MHD continues to assess our existing programs' effectiveness in birth outcomes and a prevailing gap revolved around how we service fathers in a maternal-heavy realm. In our journey to becoming a "one stop shop" and offering a customizable menu of resources to the community, we want to invest into the underutilized resource in fathers on maternal and child health; building inclusion and bolstering the importance of fathers in the health of babies and birthing people.

3. **Need for Grant Funds and Impact on Other Departmental Operations (Applies only to Programs):**  
This grant requires no city-match and will fund the subgrantee's contractual costs, client supplies and funds awarded to us to send targeted staff to the Fulfilling the Promise Conference in 2025.
  
4. **Results Measurement/Progress Report (Applies only to Programs):**  
Throughout the course of this grant we will be monitoring the following objectives and goals:
  - Number of fathers/partners enrolled in Dad Doula cohorts (goal of 100 fathers enrolled in year 1)
  - Evaluation of birth outcomes of clients enrolled in MHD programs that participate in the Dad Doula Cohorts. Data to be considered includes infant/maternal loss, birthing experiences, etc.
    - o At least 80% of enrolled families that completed the Dad Doula cohorts express increased confidence, goal attainment, increased confidence in understanding pregnancy and parenting (qualitative and quantitative pre and post surveys and interviews)
  - EFM/DAD/BOMB to incorporate at least 1 new strategy into workflows/practice to better incorporate fatherhood engagement, navigating co-parenting relationships, etc. (may be uniform across all programs or individualized).
  - Incorporation of fatherhood engagement professional development in routine training/onboarding of FCH staff.
  
5. **Grant Period, Timetable and Program Phase-Out Plan:**  
10/01/2024-09/30/2025, renewable up to 3 additional years.
  
6. **Provide a list of Subgrantees:**  
Joshua Zawadi (Liston) and Symphony Zawadi – Conscious Community Curators (Melanated Daddy/Dad Doula University Programs are under this umbrella)
  
7. **If Possible, complete Grant Budget Form and attach to back.**  
See attached