



Maternal-Child Health Education, Training, Consultation and Support

STATEMENT ON ADVANCING DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND EQUITY

September 15, 2020

As ongoing public protests sweep the country, it has become important to recognize the various challenges, uncertainties, and much needed discussions that underlay racial inequality, unfairness, and diversity. As we deal with the pandemic of COVID-19 globally, the pandemic of racial injustices, police brutality as it pertains to the criminal justice system have become an issue of importance to every person. The tragic death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 was a visceral reminder of the disadvantages the African American communities face when it comes to their interactions with law enforcement. The numerous incidences of countless injustices committed against law abiding citizens and immigrant populations has caused us to evaluate ourselves collectively and individually and at Happy Mama Healthy Baby Alliance, we believe in taking steps to ensure that tangible progress is made onward.

Happy Mama Healthy Baby Alliance (formerly The Association for Wholistic Maternal and Newborn Health) is a community-based, multicultural organization dedicated to training and increasing access to Doulas, providing evidence-based childbirth education, providing continuing education and networking opportunities for health professionals, promoting social justice in maternal-infant health care and improving the quality of maternity care in the USA and beyond. We are also dedicated to eradicating racism and sexism and homophobia and to more prominently make reparations for the injustices toward African-American/Black communities and other minority groups in healthcare. Each and every person deserves to be treated with utmost respect, kindness, and empathy. It's clear that returning to "business as usual" will not be good for business. Over the past months, countless companies that don't usually talk about racism publicly have spoken out to condemn racism and police brutality; here at our organization, we have been engaged in a discussion the impact of social-environmental and racial stressors on birth outcomes and health trajectories since our inception in

1993. Indeed, the mission of our organization was focused on this from the start; years before the current crisis. Our founder, Ms. Cordelia Hanna-Cheruiyot, a midwife, doula, health educator, and public health practitioner has been a leader in the community-based Doula movement since 2002 and she established the very first community-based doula program for African-American/Black families in

Los Angeles the same year, which she coordinated for ten years at Pasadena Public Health Department Black Infant Health Program. On these critical issues, neither consumers nor employees are looking for vague platitudes about change; they want to see companies committing to action within their own walls. Achieving racial equity in the workplace will be one of the most important endeavors companies like ours will undertake.

Though the board is in continued discussions regarding our efforts to promote perinatal justice, we wanted to share the first three steps we're taking this year:

- Develop a racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse committee to address the global challenges of diversity, inclusion, and equity in the context of the Doula community and the families we serve.
- Host a listening session every 6 months to hear their concerns and suggestions as it relates to racial injustice and how Happy Mama Healthy Baby Alliance can better serve them.
- Amplify the voices of perinatal educators, midwives, and doulas of color by sharing their stories with our sphere of influence.
- Continue to offer staff and community persons training on anti-racism.

We welcome all persons of varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds, gender identities and sexual orientations to join with us to work harmoniously together in our mission to achieve perinatal health equity for all.



Oluwatosin Atolagbe, MPH, MBA
Chairman/Member, Board of Directors

Notice: Due to prior misconstruction or inaccurate information on this specific page months ago, unbeknownst to Tosin Atolagbe, and to further bring clarity to inquiring bodies/entities, he is not a medical practitioner/licensed in the State of California nor has he been associated with HMHBA in that capacity. His role and participation is on a volunteer and leadership capacity as board chairman of directors and an executive to the organization. (6/28/2021)