



The City of
Worcester

Worcester Division of Public Health

Blue Cross Blue Shield MA Perinatal Grant
Worcester Maternal and Child Health Office
June 2026



BCBSMA - Overview

Timeline: January – December 2026

Partners: Worcester DPH & Worcester ACTS

Funder: BCBSMA

Funding : \$50,000

BCBSMA - Overview

We will track the success of this goal based on the total number of individuals and organizations reached through this initiative. We anticipate reaching more **than 1,000 individuals and 30+ community partner organizations** through the activities outlined below.

Activity 1: workshops, webinars, and seminar success will be measured by the number of training sessions, attendance rates, and participant feedback. We estimate hosting approximately **15-20 trainings throughout the year**, reaching an average of **15-20 people per session**.

BCBSMA - Overview

Activity 2: Community events success will be measured by the number of events, attendance rates, and participants feedback. We estimate **hosting 2 annual events, at least one of which will be held in April 2026 during Black Maternal Health Week** and we hope to increase our turnout this year to include more than 200+ individuals.

Activity 3: Education campaign success will be measured by the number of education materials developed, the number of languages available, and the number of individuals reached with these materials. We expect to distribute materials on **at least 3 topics in a variety of languages during tabling outreach activities and education sessions**. We will also distribute **printed materials at partner organizations to reach a wider audience**, we will track the reach of these distribution efforts as a measure of success as well.

BCBSMA – Responsibilities (WDPH)

WDPH will offer **administrative, outreach, and evaluation support**, leveraging its strong relationships with community groups, local health care providers, and trusted messengers to ensure community education reaches the most vulnerable community members.

Outreach: provide opportunities for tabling at city-sponsored public events, increasing visibility/connecting directly with residents who may benefit from services. translation of program materials into languages spoken by Worcester's population. public spaces available at no cost for educational classes and training, ensuring that the program can operate in accessible, community-centered locations.

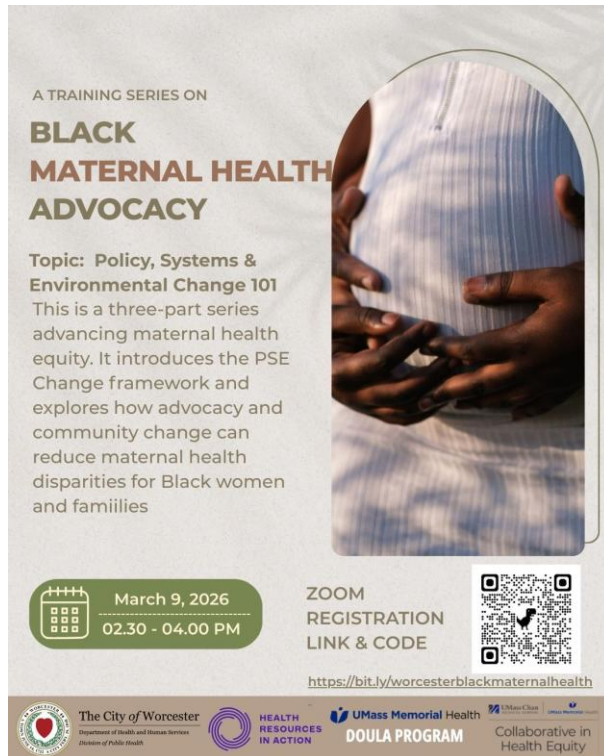
Administrative: facilitating/coordinating training sessions by leveraging its connections.

sharing both qualitative and quantitative local public health data to aid in program evaluation.

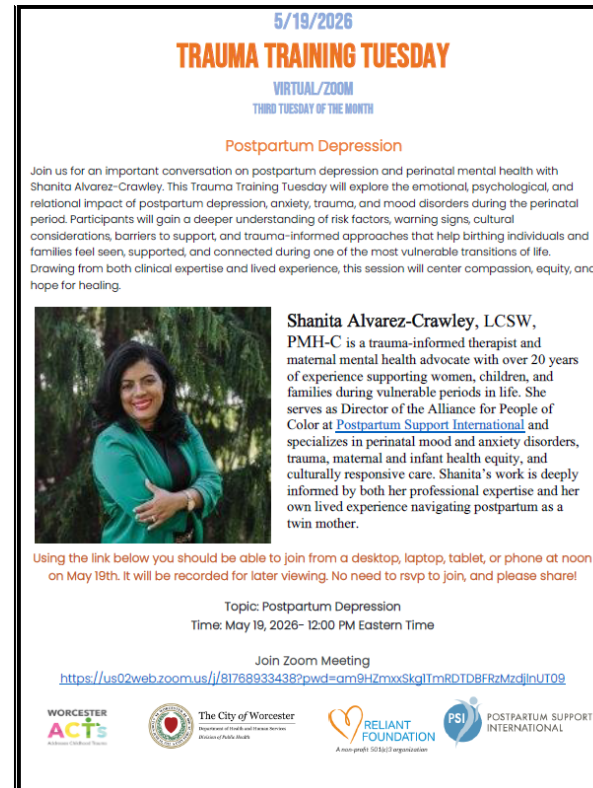
data collection and dissemination on their data dashboard.

Goal 1: Increase community education and awareness about maternal health

- Trainings: organize workshops or webinars/seminars – Hosted 5 events, partnered on many more.



Black Maternal Health
Advocacy Training
3- Part Series



Trauma Training Tuesday
– reached up to 1500
community members



National Public Health
Week Event – WSU Public
Health Students

Strategy 1: Workshops, webinars, and seminar

- Trainings: organize workshops or webinars/seminars
- Events: 10 so far
- Total Attendees: 344

Strategy 2: Black Maternal Health Week

- 2 events
- 140 attendees
- ~15 organizations

- Woo Mamas Wellness Event
 - 65 attendees/ families served
 - 10 community organizations
- Black Maternal Health Summit
 - 75 attendees
 - 10 community organizations
- And other supported events:



Goal 3: Multilingual printed resources and billboards

- At least 10 materials
- Translation into 4 languages

Goal 3: Multilingual printed resources and billboards

- Create (13) culturally sensitive educational campaigns



HEART HEALTH DURING PREGNANCY

Why It Matters:
Pregnancy puts extra stress on your heart and blood vessels. Taking care of your heart helps protect both you and your baby.

Know the Warning Signs:
Contact your provider right away if you have:

- Chest pain or pressure
- Shortness of breath (especially at rest)
- Rapid or irregular heartbeat
- Swelling in face or hands (sudden or severe)
- Severe headaches or vision changes
- Feeling dizzy or faint

Common Heart-Related Conditions:

- High blood pressure & preeclampsia
- Chronic hypertension
- Peripartum cardiomyopathy (rare but serious)

How to Protect Your Heart:

- Attend all prenatal appointments
- Monitor blood pressure regularly
- Stay active
- Eat a balanced, heart-healthy diet
- Stay hydrated
- Manage stress and get enough rest
- Avoid smoking, alcohol, and drugs

Risk Factors:

- Have high blood pressure or diabetes
- Have a history of heart disease
- Are pregnant with twins or more
- Over age 35

Visit CDC.com for more info on high blood pressure during pregnancy

The City of Worcester
Department of Health and Human Services
Baldwin Public Health

WORCESTER MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH RESOURCES

Free & low-cost services for pregnant women, parents, children, and families

- Food & nutrition assistance
- Pregnancy & postpartum support
- Infant & child supplies
- More free or low-cost services

Contact us at 306-799-8831

GESTATIONAL DIABETES

What is it?
A type of diabetes that develops during pregnancy

Risk Factors:

- Family history of diabetes
- Previous Gestational diabetes
- Overweight before pregnancy
- Ages 35+

Tips on how to manage:

- Eat a carb-controlled diet
- Exercise regularly
- Monitor your blood sugar levels
- Take medication if needed

Share your diagnosis with your primary care doctor:
Gestational diabetes increases the risk of type 2 diabetes later in life, so regular follow-ups with your doctor is important!

Visit CDC.com for more info on gestational diabetes.

Are You Pregnant? Work With a Doula!

WHO IS A DOULA?
A trained professional who provides physical, emotional, and informational support to women and their families through birth and labor

NOTE THAT...
Doulas are not physicians or nurses! They do not provide medical care, diagnose conditions, or perform medical procedures.

WHY WORK WITH A DOULA?

Doulas offer:

- Calm, steady support throughout pregnancy, birth, and after
- Comfort, encouragement, and clear communication
- Confidence and preparation
- Breathing and relaxation techniques
- Partner and family support
- Guidance through the postpartum transition
- Reassurance every step of the way
- So much more!

WOMEN WITH DOULA SUPPORT REPORT:

- Increased emotional well-being
- Reduced stress & anxiety during labor
- Calm & positive birth experience
- Increased feelings of comfort & support
- Reduced need for epidural
- Shorter labor
- Lower chances of C-section

DOULA SERVICES ARE COVERED THROUGH MASSHEALTH

SCAN QR CODE TO LEARN MORE

The City of Worcester
Department of Health and Human Services
Baldwin Public Health

Goal 3: Multilingual printed resources and billboards

- Create (13) educational campaigns for social media reach – reached 14k+ community members



FEEDBACK / CHALLENGES

- WRTA not accepting bus ads
- WACTs putting in more time than expected – to be added to budget.
- BMHW line item needs more resources allocated to that
- BMHW needs to reach more people – put more time and energy towards that. Engage diverse professionals, more time, efforts and money reaching the folks we need to reach.
- Better community engagement to reach people that needs – connect more with folks doing the work, stipend an intern
- Meet together to review partners before establishing collaborations with them
- WACTs has made work easy with availability of funds
- BCBSMA has also been very easy to work with

NEXT STEPS

- **Budget – \$16,000**
- **Reporting**
- **Reapplication – add intern for community engagement as part of write up**