



# Exploring Maternal Health in KanCare: *The Care Team*

## 1 p.m. **Welcome**

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**Alexa Heseltine**, Intern, Kansas Health Institute

## 1:05 p.m. **Maternal Care Team Overview**

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**Shelby Rowell, M.P.A.**, Analyst, Kansas Health Institute

## 1:15 p.m. **State Perspective – A Conversation with KDHE**

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**Moderator: Sheena L. Schmidt, M.P.P.**, Senior Analyst & Strategy Team Leader, Kansas Health Institute

**Shalae Harris, M.P.A., B.S.N.**, Deputy Director of Medical Bureau-Kansas Medicaid, Kansas Department of Health and Environment

## 1:35 p.m. **KanCare Conversations**

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**Moderator: Sheena L. Schmidt, M.P.P.**, Senior Analyst & Strategy Team Leader, Kansas Health Institute

**Stephanie Jerguson, B.S.N., R.N., C.C.M.**, Healthy First Steps Maternal Program Coordinator, UnitedHealthcare Community & State Kansas

**Thamara Subramanian, M.P.H.**, Health Equity Director, Healthy Blue Kansas

## 2 p.m. **Voices from the Care Team**

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**Moderator: Shelby Rowell, M.P.A.**, Analyst, Kansas Health Institute

**Brenda Bandy, IBCLC**, Executive Director, Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition

**Mariah Chrans, Ph.D.**, Programs Director, Community Health Council of Wyandotte County

**Sapphire Garcia, B.S.**, Executive Director, Kansas Birth Justice Society

**Sharla Smith, B.S., Ph.D., M.P.H.**, Associate Professor, University of Kansas Medical Center

**Terrah A. Stroda, C.N.M., M.S., A.P.R.N.**, OB/GYN, Stormont Vail Flint Hills, OBGYN Department

## 2:25 p.m. **Closing Remarks**

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## 2:30 p.m. **Adjourn**

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***Brenda Bandy, IBCLC, Executive Director, Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition***

Brenda Bandy is the Executive Director of the Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition where she works with private insurance and Kansas Medicaid to improve coverage for lactation support. She is an International Board-Certified Lactation Consultant and an active member of the Kansas Maternal Child Health Council and Early Childhood Recommendation Panel.



***Mariah Chrans, Ph.D., Programs Director, Community Health Council of Wyandotte County***

Mariah Chrans has 20 years of experience in maternal child health, public health and with Community Health Worker programs. Her body of work includes pushing the boundaries of public health and health care, saying out loud what is said quietly, advocating for the inclusion, safety and the well-being of all individuals.



***Sapphire Garcia, B.S., Executive Director, Kansas Birth Justice Society***

Sapphire Garcia is a community-based birth worker and longtime reproductive rights advocate dedicated to advancing reproductive justice and maternal health equity. She is the founder and Executive Director of the Kansas Birth Justice Society, a Black- and Brown-led organization working to expand access to reproductive health care, defend reproductive rights and improve birth outcomes across Kansas. Drawing on years of frontline experience, Garcia champions community-centered models of care that honor cultural traditions, protect bodily autonomy and address the systemic inequities that harm marginalized communities.



***Shalae Harris, M.P.A., B.S.N., Deputy Director of Medical Bureau-Kansas Medicaid, Kansas Department of Health and Environment***

Shalae Harris is the Deputy Director of the Kansas Medicaid Medical Bureau at KDHE. She received her nursing degree from Kansas Newman University and her master's in public administration from Wichita State University. With more than 20 years' of experience in public health, Harris has served in various roles around the state and region in health departments, non-profits, government affairs and state and federal programs. Her passion is to help the most vulnerable, working with collaborative teams to bring collective impact and change.



**Stephanie Jerguson, B.S.N., R.N., C.C.M., Healthy First Steps Maternal Program Coordinator, United Healthcare Community & State Kansas**

Stephanie Jerguson is a dedicated registered nurse with experience in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, maternal health, health care quality and case management. She leverages this experience in her current role as Program Coordinator for the Maternal and Child Program with UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Kansas to help address needs associated with social determinants of health. Jerguson's passion for health care and dedication to improving health outcomes have driven her to diligently address the needs of families across Kansas. She firmly believes that addressing these needs is crucial to enhancing overall health and has contributed to the betterment of health care services and the lives of countless families across the state.



**Sharla Smith, B.S., M.P.H., Ph.D., Associate Professor, University of Kansas Medical Center**

Sharla Smith is a leading expert and dedicated advocate for maternal and infant health. She serves as an Associate Professor in the Department of Population Health, Director of Birth Equity in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Associate Director of Policy in the Center for African American Health at the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Kansas City. She holds a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff; a master's degree in public health, in health policy and management; and a doctorate in health services and systems research from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. With a distinguished public health career spanning since 2006, Smith's expertise is centered on Black maternal and infant health. Her approach is distinguished by a strong emphasis on community-driven solutions and strategic policy development.



**Terrah A. Stroda, C.N.M., M.S., A.P.R.N., OB/GYN, Stormont Vail Flint Hills, OBGYN Department**

Terrah Stroda is a full scope midwife at Stormont Vail Health Systems, Flint Hills campus. Stroda has provided Certified Nurse-Midwife care for women and families in her community for 22 years. She also co-founded and currently serves as the Medical Director for Delivering Change: Healthy Families, Healthy Communities, which provides individual, integrated health care services within their local OBGYN practice. This care model has now been utilized across the state as a collective impact model for improving maternal and infant health outcomes. To that end, Stroda now works part time as a Maternal Quality Improvement (QI) Coordinator with the Kansas Perinatal Quality Collaborative to integrate best practice models in the inpatient obstetrics setting-improving outcomes in hospitals, accounting for nearly 90 percent of Kansas births.



**Thamara Subramanian, M.P.H., Health Equity Director, Healthy Blue Kansas**

Thamara Subramanian is a born and raised Kansan with a passion for the intersection between health and justice. She currently serves as the Health Equity Director for a KanCare Managed Care Organization, Healthy Blue Kansas, where she is responsible for overseeing and implementing a whole health strategy to reducing disparities and improve cultural competence, and foster health and wellness across programs, policies and initiatives for Medicaid members across Kansas. Subramanian shares her insights and leadership throughout the community through volunteerism, including involvement in Girls on the Run and Big Brothers Big Sisters Kansas City. Previously, Subramanian worked in both health education and equity and inclusion consulting and co-authored a book, *Racial Justice at Work: Practical Solutions to Systemic Change*. She has a bachelor's degree in psychology and medical anthropology from the University of Michigan, and a master's from Harvard School of Public Health.