

# An innovative, integrated transportation solution that improves access to maternal healthcare



## Challenge

Washington, DC, has some of the highest rates of maternal and infant mortality in the United States. The maternal mortality rate in DC is 35.6 per 100,000 live births (almost 19% higher than the national average),<sup>1</sup> while, as of 2020, the infant mortality rate in DC is 7.7 per 1,000 live births (a rate that's over 30% higher than the national average).<sup>2</sup>

Research has shown that timely and adequate prenatal care can improve outcomes for mothers and babies, but we also know that many women find their transportation options—or lack thereof—to be a major barrier to obtaining that care.

## Solution

Uber Health and Surgo Ventures partnered with 2 federally qualified health centers (Community of Hope and Mary's Center) to launch Rides for Moms. The program provides free transportation for prenatal- and postnatal-care appointments for up to 1,000 pregnant people.

One of this program's key differentiators is that transportation is integrated into care delivery; participants are offered a choice in how they receive their rides—scheduled on their behalf through Uber Health or with vouchers—and receive support from transportation coordinators. The program is being rolled out in a phased approach: it began with an operational feasibility pilot, then moved into its current assessment phase. Post-evaluation, it will be extended into new locations.

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/health-of-women-and-children/measure/maternal\\_mortality\\_a/state/DC?edition-year=2019](https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/health-of-women-and-children/measure/maternal_mortality_a/state/DC?edition-year=2019)

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/health-of-women-and-children/measure/IMR\\_MCH/state/DC?edition-year=2020](https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/health-of-women-and-children/measure/IMR_MCH/state/DC?edition-year=2020)

# 76%

of participants said it would have been difficult to get to their appointment without the rides program.

“Not only did Imani feel safer with her care, but she also benefited from many programs offered by the Family Health and Birth Center. The Ride for Moms program, offered through a partnership with Uber Health and Surgo Ventures, was incredibly helpful because Imani doesn't drive. This makes access to healthcare much easier, covering rides with Uber to go to and from appointments.”

**Community of Hope** on [the enormous impact transportation has](#) on mothers—and on one mom in particular, Imani



## Impact

The program is helping vulnerable moms get to care. Preliminary findings show that 76% of participants said it would have been difficult to get to their appointment without the rides provided to them.

The program is being measured regularly to evaluate impact and understand how patients perceive its value. Preliminary surveys show that the program is serving a vulnerable population: 88% of the program participants are not engaged in full-time work, and 58% are experiencing high-risk pregnancies. Approximately 99% of participants for whom we have race and ethnicity data identify as either BIPOC or Hispanic.

Other preliminary findings show that participants who have used Rides for Moms at least once tend to use it for approximately 66% of all their appointments, and at least 90% of responses about rider experience were positive across perceptions of ease, reliability, and safety.

## Challenge

- Washington, DC, has some of the nation's highest rates of maternal and infant mortality
- Timely and adequate prenatal care is a key determinant of health outcomes; regular prenatal care reduces risk of pregnancy and birth complications
- Only 68% of women received adequately frequent prenatal care in DC, one of the lowest rates in the country<sup>3</sup>
- Lack of access to affordable and accessible transportation is a major barrier to care—particularly for low-income women and women of color<sup>4,5</sup>

## Solution

- Offer an integrated, patient-centric transportation option
- Conduct robust evaluation of impact on prenatal-care attendance

## Barriers Addressed

- Time and cost of transportation
- Logistical and structural—for example, language barriers, lack of tech proficiency, access to bank accounts, or aversion to sharing personal information
- Behavioral and motivational—for example, perceived self-efficacy and mental energy strain

<sup>3</sup>CDC National Vital Statistics Reports, 2016. [https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr67/nvsr67\\_03.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr67/nvsr67_03.pdf)

<sup>4</sup>Braveman P, Marchi K, Egerter S, Pearl M, Neuhaus J. Barriers to timely prenatal care among women with insurance: the importance of prepregnancy factors. *Obstet Gynecol.* 2000;95(6, Part 1):874-880. doi:10.1016/S0029-7844(00)00780-8

<sup>5</sup>Mazul MC, Salm Ward TC, Ngui EM. Anatomy of Good Prenatal Care: Perspectives of Low Income African-American Women on Barriers and Facilitators to Prenatal Care. *J Racial Ethn Health Disparities.* 2017;4(1):79-86.doi:10.1007/s40615-015-0204-x

Uber Health's platform is able to facilitate everything from mobility solutions to critical deliveries, streamlining population health management and supporting better patient outcomes. For more information, visit [uberhealth.com](https://uberhealth.com).