

Commitment Announcement

Tuesday, September 24, 2024

Session | AI Applications for Greater Social Impact

Commitment: AI/ML to Reduce Maternal and Infant Health Disparities

Meet Dr. Shalon Irving, an epidemiologist for the CDC and a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Public Health Service. Well-connected in her community with a village of support around her.

Or Kira Johnson. Mother. Marathon runner. Fluent in five languages. Loved beyond measure by her husband and family.

What do these two women have in common?

Both of these accomplished, educated, caring Black mothers who ‘did everything right’ in their pregnancy are no longer with us.

Both deaths were preventable.

Standing here as an accomplished, educated, caring Black mother, their stories and the similar stories of so many other Black mothers across our country are simply devastating.

ANGELA THOMAS

These stories highlight that it's more than just education, poverty, or lifestyle that can be blamed for why giving birth while Black is so dangerous in the U.S.

Other factors – such as bias and discrimination - must change in our healthcare system.

Change takes time. But our patients can't wait.

At MedStar Health, we are working NOW!

Through partnerships with our community, we tailor care for high-risk conditions, integrate mental health and social services, and meet our patients where they are, giving them the resources that they need.

And it's working: Patients who receive prenatal care through Safe Babies Safe Moms are less likely to experience severe maternal morbidity, have low birthweight babies or babies born preterm.

And perhaps more impactful, the disparity gap is closing!

Black patients experience 53% fewer cases of severe maternal morbidity, and 60% fewer very low birthweight babies.

CLINTON GLOBAL INITIATIVE

Our Commitment to Action recognizes we must do more. Providers are more likely to speak negatively about Black mothers. And less likely to give them the care they need. Artificial intelligence can help us systematically remove bias from the care delivery process keeping mothers like Dr. Irving and Kira Johnson safe.

We are in year two of our three year commitment to use AI to build a safety surveillance system that flags signals of potential bias in healthcare and will help reduce disparities in maternal health outcomes.

We are working to develop a minimum viable product and implementation guide that can be shared with other hospitals and health systems so all birthing individuals receive the respectful care they need and deserve.

We are so grateful to the Clinton Global Initiative for supporting this work and helping us establish many important connections! I can't wait to talk with all of you about how we can partner together to keep Black moms and babies safe.

Thank you.

ANGELA THOMAS