

Title: Advancing Integrated Models (AIM) to improve pregnancy outcomes: A National Institute of Nursing Research initiative

Background: Disparities in pregnancy outcomes are a persistent public health crisis that requires a comprehensive understanding of contributing factors, including both social conditions and healthcare factors, and the development of community-centered solutions that address these principal causes. The National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) advances this perspective through its strategic plan and research initiatives, which are focused on supporting research that advances health equity and addresses social determinants of health.

Objective: To highlight NINR's strategic plan by showcasing research supported under the NINR-led AIM Initiative.

Methods: The AIM Initiative was launched in 2022 to stimulate research to develop and evaluate integrated care models that address healthcare access and/or healthcare quality, together with structural and social inequities to prevent adverse pregnancy outcomes among racial and ethnic minority birthing people.

Results: Under the AIM initiative, NINR funded 12 projects. Funded projects span several United States geographical locations and racial and ethnic populations experiencing pregnancy disparities, including American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, Black, and Hispanic birthing people. Examples of funded projects include an evaluation of the effects of Medicaid policy interventions such as equity payment and obstetric bundled payment; an implementation study of an integrated, multilevel maternity care home model; research examining integration of community-based patient navigation to address social needs; and a dyadic care intervention model, with mothers and infants cared for in tandem.

Conclusions: The drivers of disparities in pregnancy outcomes are complex and multifaceted. Prior research suggests that comprehensive care provided throughout the pregnancy continuum can prevent adverse outcomes. The AIM Initiative is intended to increase knowledge about how delivering integrated care impacts health and addresses health disparities among racial and ethnic minority birthing people during pregnancy and the postpartum period.