



## “What About Men?”

Research priorities of men of color who are partners to women at risk for preterm birth

*Community Report – San Francisco, Oakland, Fresno*

### Background

In California, 9.6% of all live births are preterm (before 37 weeks of pregnancy), with rates disproportionately affecting families of color. Little is known about the unanswered questions of men of color who are partners to women at risk for preterm birth. From November 2017 – September 2019, UCSF researchers with the California Preterm Birth Initiative (PTBi-CA) conducted six focus groups with 26 men from San Francisco, Oakland and Fresno who identified as African American, Asian American, and Latino. These men shared their experiences and priorities for research to reduce preterm birth and improve outcomes. They identified 209 unanswered research questions and agreed the top priorities for preterm birth research.

### Priority Focus Areas for Prematurity Research

The following three major themes summarize the men’s research questions:

#### Questions about the healthcare system –

Why is there...and what can be done to change...

Exclusion of father from pregnancy and birth; Healthcare and decision-making; Racism and classism in hospital and institutional practices; Profit and role of insurance companies in healthcare; Bias, negative stereotypes and disrespect from healthcare providers

#### Questions about Fathers, Families, and Community Roles and Support –

How can there be greater...

Roles for fathers during pregnancy and newborn healthcare; Support for families; Support for men’s own health; Information for partners of pregnant people; Public health and resources for communities with high rates of prematurity

#### Questions About Health and Healthcare of mom and baby –

We need to learn more about...

Causes and risk of preterm birth; Teens health and pregnancy; Methods and complications during birth; Health before pregnancy and care of pre-existing health conditions; Diet for healthy pregnancies; The effects of trauma and stress on preterm birth; Preterm baby health; The effects of treatment and testing on mothers and babies

## Men's Top Priorities - Topics for Future Research

Fresno, Oakland, San Francisco (combined)

1. Communication and cultural sensitivity of healthcare providers
2. Methods and complications of birth
3. Hospital/institutional practices
4. Teens health and pregnancy
5. Parent health during/before pregnancy
6. Public health resources for communities
7. Fathers role in pregnancy
8. Diet and pregnancy
9. Decision making: who and how
10. Support for families
11. Information needs of partners
12. Men's health
13. Trauma and stress during pregnancy
14. Causes and risk of preterm birth
15. Profit and insurance issues
16. Treatment, screening and diagnostic testing in pregnancy
17. Preterm baby health

### How to Use These Priorities

**PTBi-CA** uses the research priority topics and questions generated by these focus groups to inform the research priorities of the initiative. PTBi-CA research and collective impact activities are focused on decreasing racial disparities in preterm birth.

We call on **healthcare and social service providers** to use the best available evidence to improve services related to the priority topics and questions, to educate patients/clients on what is known about these and to practice respectful care and shared decision-making in all patient/client interactions.

We call on **research funders and researchers** to join us in tackling the unanswered questions about pregnancy birth and newborn health that matter most to women at high risk for preterm birth – and to partner with women, families and communities most affected by the preterm birth epidemic when doing this research. Join us!

### For more information contact:

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