

2026

ARIZONA PERINATAL TRUST

Impact Report



AZPERINATAL.ORG

IMPROVING HEALTH OUTCOMES OF ARIZONA'S MOTHERS AND BABIES

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Dear Friends, Stakeholders, and Community Partners,

The start of the new year is a time to reflect on past opportunities and successes, with an unbridled focus on 2026's possibilities. Your contribution to the Arizona Perinatal Trust (APT), Arizona's CDC-recognized Perinatal Quality Collaborative (PQC), through volunteer hours, participation in the hospital's perinatal level-of-care verification program, strategic partnership, or generous donation culminated in a marked change. Over 96% of Arizona births occur in APT-certified facilities. The rigorous hospital verification process includes quality improvement bundles to ensure that all Arizona birth parents and infants receive the safest possible health care, with staff, equipment, and evidence-informed practices aligned with patient needs.

Moving beyond the APT's historical focus on hospital certification, 2024 and 2025 marked a period of rapid transformation. The Board of Trustees and the Board of Directors' Executive Committee unanimously voted to expand APT's scope to better target maternal and neonatal health outcomes, with an emphasis on health equity. The result includes:

- A reenergized mission, vision, and core values
- Receipt of four federal and national grant awards
- Expanded hospital certification footprint
- Solidified position as the CDC-recognized perinatal quality collaborative for Arizona
- Alignment with the National Network of Perinatal Quality Collaboratives (NNPQC)
- Establishment of new and strengthened community partnerships
- Implementation of an interprofessional data governance and quality committee to better use Arizona perinatal quality data

The most remarkable feature of these accomplishments is the work of highly skilled healthcare professionals and community members, who donate more than 3,000 hours of uncompensated time each year. Federal and state leaders describe APT's remarkable volunteer model as "unparalleled" but note that it is not replicable due to the volunteer workload. These dedicated volunteers, combined with a noble mission and proven outcomes, form the basis of my commitment to serve as chief executive officer. We look forward to the possibilities of 2026 with great anticipation!

Much gratitude in serving together,

Laurie Wood

Laurie S. Wood, PhD

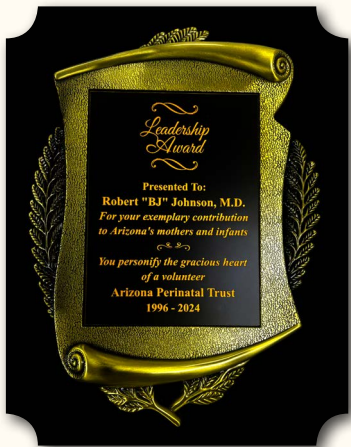
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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**“THERE IS NOTHING MORE POWERFUL THAN
THE HEART OF A VOLUNTEER.”**

Dr. Robert “BJ” Johnson



ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

The APT Board of Trustees and the Board of Directors' Executive Committee jointly revised the APT Mission, Vision, and Core Values to reflect a broader scope of work that extends beyond the Perinatal Levels of Care Hospital Verification program. Our three-pronged focus on hospital certification, education, and advocacy, each synergized through collaboration, guides all organizational activities, including new initiatives outside the hospital certification process and educational conferences, to improve Arizona's perinatal health outcomes.

[DONATE](#)

MISSION

Our mission is to improve parent and infant health outcomes by promoting quality, safety, equity and inclusion. The Arizona Perinatal Trust achieves these aims through advocacy, education, collaboration and certification.

VISION

The Arizona Perinatal Trust promotes and facilitates quality health, wellness, and equity for all parents, infants, and families as a regional and national leader.

Core Values

COLLABORATIVE

Working cohesively and synergistically with state and national constituents seeking to improve and sustain perinatal health

OUTCOMES IMPROVEMENT

Driving all efforts through data analysis as a foundational objective

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

Providing the overarching framework that guides all decision-making and action

LEADERSHIP

Facilitating positive change by exemplifying a commitment to service, integrity, and humility beyond self interest

EDUCATION

Functioning as a resource of best practice through acquisition, contribution to, and sharing of knowledge

VOLUNTEER INTERPROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE

Providing a unique model for action through a voluntary certification program that values service for the common good

VIEW OUR NEW WEBSITE AT AZPERINATAL.ORG



*Targeting
Health
Equity*

THROUGH
GRANT WORK
AND COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIPS

OBSTETRIC LIFE SUPPORT (OBLs) ARIZONA

AGENCY FOR HEALTHCARE RESEARCH & QUALITY (AHRQ)

2023-2027

Implementation of a Maternal Resuscitation Curriculum in a Regionalized Perinatal Health System:
Maximizing the Chain of Survival to Reduce Maternal Health Inequities

Study Aims:

- > Identify and train healthcare workers (HCWs) from hospital and prehospital contexts in Arizona to be OBLs instructors, prioritizing those that serve maternity care deserts and other marginalized communities at risk of adverse maternal health outcomes
- > Implement OBLs in hospital and prehospital contexts across the state, with the training being led by local instructors
- > Evaluate OBLs implementation and process outcomes.

Progress: Healthcare workers trained (n=121), First Responders Trained (n=170), Instructors Trained (n=35) Arizona Total Trained (322)

COMMUNITY PARTNERS:



ARIZONA EMERGENCY
MEDICAL SYSTEMS, INC



UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT
HEALTH CENTER

2024-2025 TRAINING AND IMPLEMENTATION SITES

Banner University Medical Center, Tucson

San Carlos Healthcare

Yuma Fire

Mojave Valley Fire

Gila River Healthcare

The Birth Nest

Blossom Birth and Wellness

Tohono O'odham EMS

HonorHealth



CRUCIAL VOICES OF ARIZONA

CENTER FOR DISEASE FOUNDATION

2024-2025

Project Aim: To promote respectful maternity care practices across Arizona's health care delivery systems by magnifying the voices and experiences of birthing people, family members, and support people disproportionately impacted by increased perinatal morbidity and mortality. **Strategy:** We conducted multiple focus groups with women and their support people, who shared their experiences during prenatal, birth, and postpartum care. Community groups included American Indian and Alaska Natives, Afghan, Latina, Black, lower socioeconomic, and LGBTQIA+ participants. Specific themes emerged following qualitative data collection and analysis. All community groups expressed a keen desire to feel respected.

Strategy: We conducted multiple focus groups of women, and their support people shared their experiences during prenatal, birth, and postpartum care. Community groups included American

Indian and Alaska Natives, Afghan, Latina, Black, lower socioeconomic and LGBTQIA+ participants. Specific themes emerged following qualitative data collection and analysis. All community groups expressed a keen desire to feel respected.



Predominant Themes Include:

- > Not feeling listened to
- > Wanting more information about problems to watch out for
- > Feeling disrespected, a lack of compassionate care, or feeling rushed
- > Not being able to ask questions and communication gaps



- > Having access challenges like difficulty reaching their provider
- > Needing explanations beyond a handout
- > Needing someone they can trust



In response, the APT launched the CDC-F funded Crucial Voices of Arizona campaign with targeted social media messaging and resources directed to women and their support people, healthcare providers, other professionals, and organizations. Videos feature focus group participants sharing their experiences in their own words. Messaging urges women to speak up when something does not feel right or need information (*Do you feel heard?*), advocating as a support person, and expanding knowledge about maternal warning signs.

Listen to their stories and download resources at <https://azperinatal.org/doyoufeelheard>.

AZPERINATAL.ORG/DOYOUFEELHEARD

IMPROVE COMMUNITY
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM
(IMPROVE-CIP) - PHASE 2:
SUPPORTING THE VILLAGES
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF HEALTH (NIH)
COMING IN 2026-2028

Implementing community-based strategies to promote maternal health in Arizona

COMMUNITY PARTNERS:



ARIZONA STATE
UNIVERSITY



OFFICE OF
HEALTH SOLUTIONS



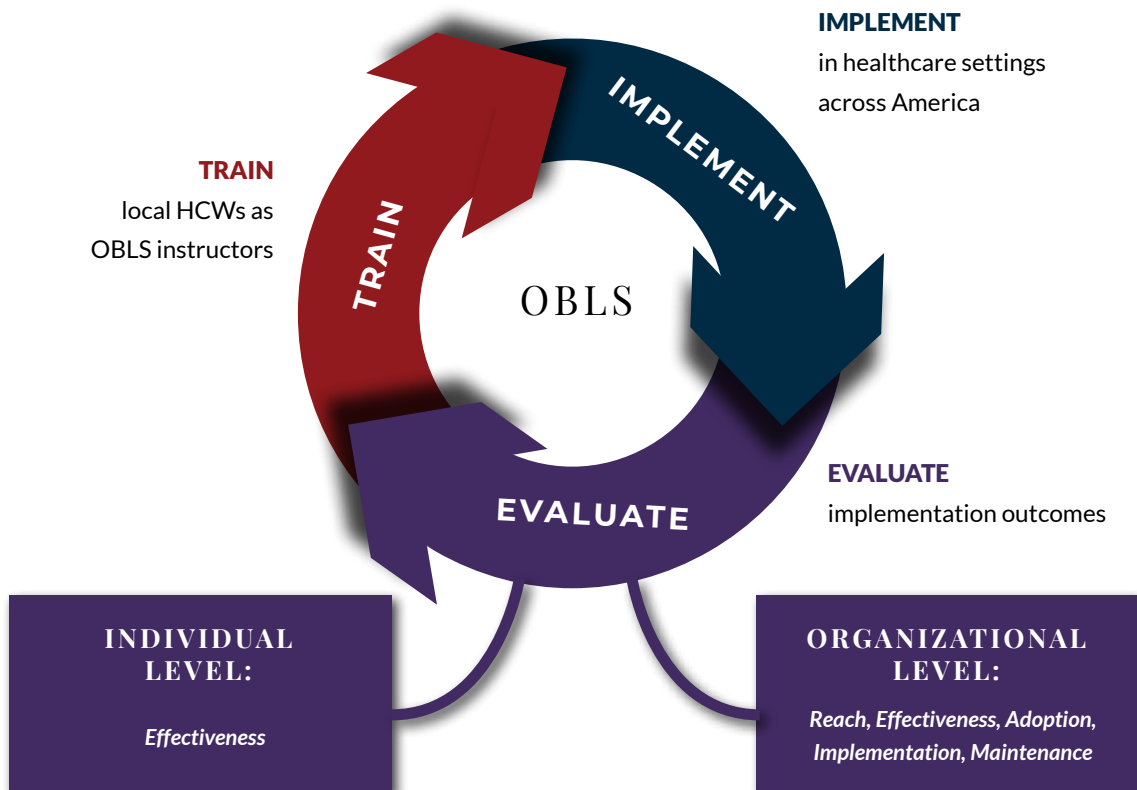
4TH TRIMESTER



THE CDC FOUNDATION
PUBLICIZES OUR WORK ON THEIR WEBSITE:

WWW.CDCFOUNDATION.ORG/BLOG/VOICES-MATERNAL-CARE-ARIZONA

National Presentations AND PUBLICATIONS



BMC HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH (2025)

Evaluating a train-the-trainer approach for implementing obstetric life support in diverse healthcare contexts throughout Arizona: A mixed methods protocol

<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-025-12739-0>

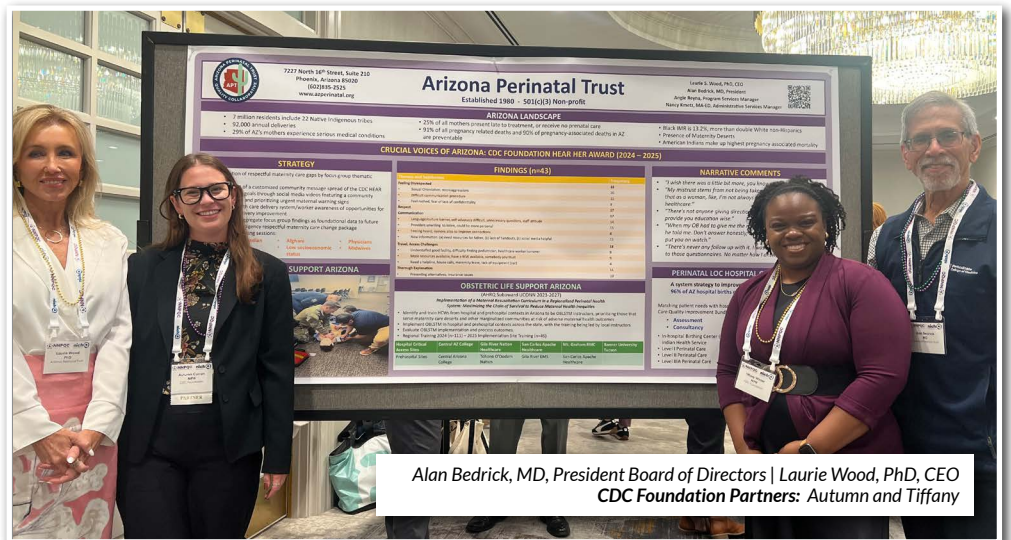
PERINATAL QUALITY COLLABORATIVE (PQC)
RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE WORK
(DECEMBER 2025)

ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN'S HEALTH, OBSTETRIC AND NEONATAL NURSING (AWHONN) (2024) PERINATAL QUALITY IMPROVEMENT COMMUNITY

Maternal Levels of Care Best Practices

NATIONAL NETWORK OF PERINATAL QUALITY COLLABORATIVES

Poster Presentation (2023, 2025)

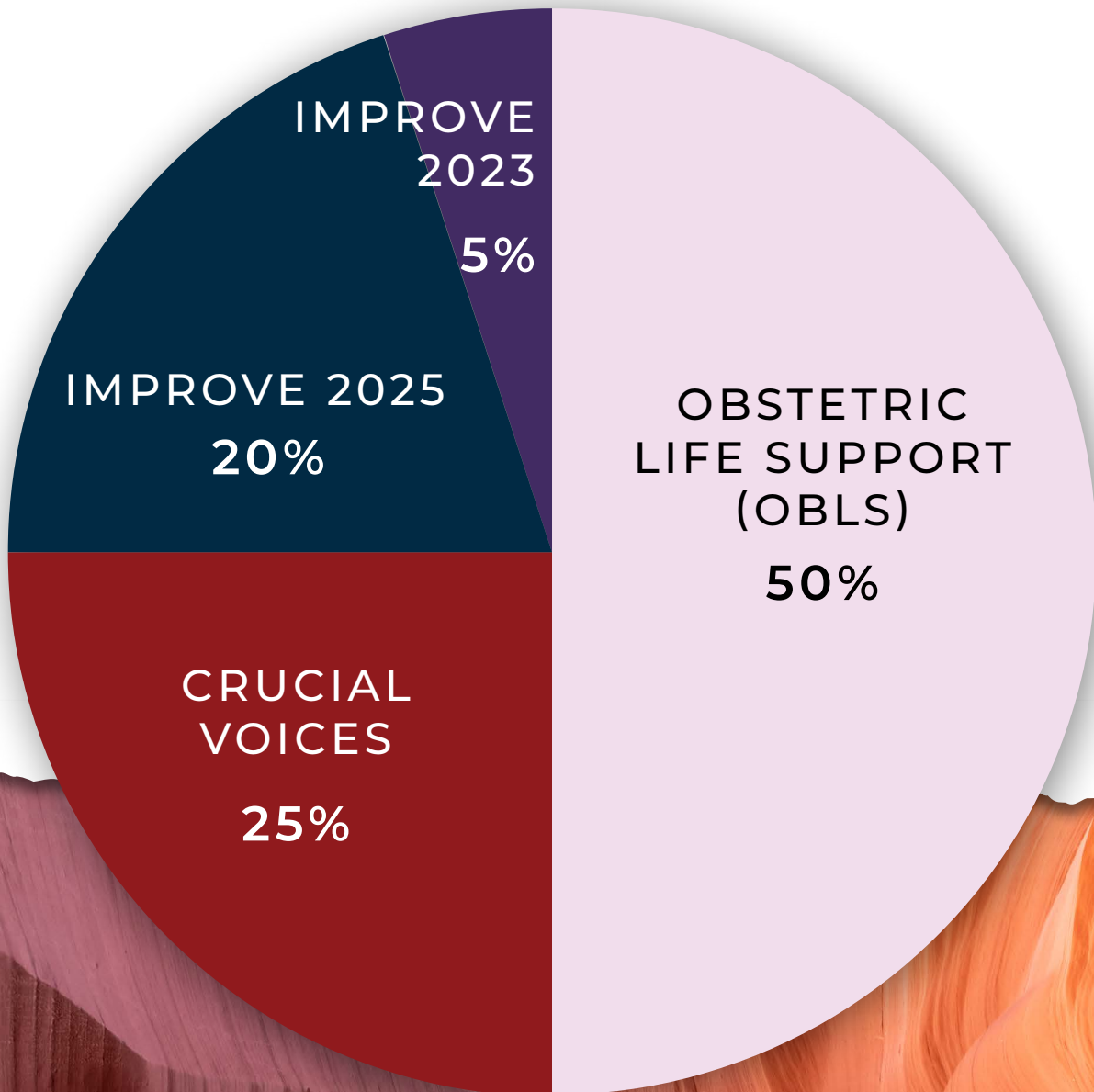


Alan Bedrick, MD, President Board of Directors | Laurie Wood, PhD, CEO
CDC Foundation Partners: Autumn and Tiffany

ASTHOCONNECTS (2023)

Risk Appropriate Care

Allocation of Grant Dollars



Certification

VOLUNTARY HOSPITAL CERTIFICATION

TARGETING HEALTH EQUITY SINCE 1980

The Voluntary Certification Program (VCP) is a peer review/quality assurance process for the purposes of reducing morbidity and mortality and improving the care of patients. The non-governmental certification process is provided under Arizona revised statutes for Quality Review and Assurance.

Benefits include:

- > Membership in a groundbreaking public/private partnership, in which peer professionals drive quality improvement in collaboration with Arizona's leaders at the Department of Health Services (DHS), Arizona Health Care Cost Containment Services (AHCCCS), and others
- > A confidential, process with a nonpunitive sharing model of immediate feedback by an interprofessional team of volunteer experts (maternal fetal medicine/obstetrics, neonatology, anesthesia, OB and neonatal nursing, social work, public health and AHCCCS)
- > Improved, reportable quality performance metrics including infant and neonatal mortality and morbidity
- > Unfettered access to a repository of best practice guidelines, policies, and technical support driven by national evidenced-based standards

- > Potential cost containment due to mitigation of risk associated with elevated quality of care delivery
- > A certification program, which is driven by national quality standards but is also Arizona specific
- > Supports the hospital's achievement of the Quadruple Aim

EXPANDING OUR REACH WITH THE ADDITION OF NEW FACILITIES

2025 CERTIFIED HOSPITALS & LEVEL OF CARE

Arizona Perinatal Trust welcomes Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center



**WIS TEAMS FROM BANNER UNIVERSITY,
PHOENIX, AND SUMMIT MEDICAL CENTER
CELEBRATE A JOB WELL DONE!**



Banner University Phoenix WIS Team



Summit Medical Center WIS Team

CERTIFIED HOSPITALS & LEVELS

<i>Abrazo Arrowhead Campus (IIIB)</i>	<i>Flagstaff Medical Center (IIIA)</i>
<i>Abrazo West Campus (II)</i>	<i>Havasu Regional Medical Center (I)</i>
<i>Banner Casa Grande Medical Center (II)</i>	<i>HonorHealth Four Peaks Medical Center (II)</i>
<i>Banner Del E Webb Medical Center (II)</i>	<i>HonorHealth Scottsdale Shea Medical Center (IIIB)</i>
<i>Banner Desert Med Center/Banner Children's at Desert (IV)</i>	<i>HonorHealth Sonoran Crossing Medical Center (II)</i>
<i>Banner Estrella Medical Center (IIIA)</i>	<i>Kingman Regional Medical Center (I)</i>
<i>Banner Gateway Medical Center (II)</i>	<i>Mercy Gilbert Medical Center (II)</i>
<i>Banner Ironwood Medical Center (II)</i>	<i>Mount Graham Regional Medical Center (I)</i>
<i>Banner Ocotillo Medical Center (II)</i>	<i>Northwest Medical Center (IIIA)</i>
<i>Banner Page Hospital (I)</i>	<i>Onvida Health Yuma Medical Center (IIIA)</i>
<i>Banner Payson Medical Center (I)</i>	<i>Phoenix Children's Hospital (IV)</i>
<i>Banner Thunderbird Medical Center (IIIB)</i>	<i>St. Joseph's Hospital & Medical Center (IIIB)</i>
<i>Banner University Medical Center - Phoenix (IV)</i>	<i>Summit Healthcare & Regional Medical Center (II)</i>
<i>Banner University Medical Center - Tucson (IV)</i>	<i>Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation (II)</i>
<i>Carondelet Holy Cross Hospital (I)</i>	<i>Tucson Medical Center (IIIB)</i>
<i>Carondelet St. Joseph's Hospital - Tucson (II)</i>	<i>Valleywise Health Medical Center (IIIB)</i>
<i>Chandler Regional Medical Center (IIIA)</i>	<i>Verde Valley Medical Center (I)</i>
<i>Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center (I)</i>	<i>Whiteriver Indian Hospital (IHBC)</i>
	<i>Yavapai Regional Medical Center - East Campus (II)</i>

2025 Annual Conference

2025 CONFERENCE TOPICS

Top 10 Things to be Concerned About with the “Normal Newborn”

Gregory C. Martin, MD

Association of Adverse Childhood Experiences and Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes

Sarah Kellerhals, MD

High Value Perinatal Care: A Team Approach

Beth G. McManis, Ph.D., CNM, MS, FACNM

Steven Calvin, MD

Sacred Beginnings: Addressing Maternal Healthcare Disparities on the Navajo Nation

Jennifer J. Whitehair, MD

Cultivating a Resilience Response: A Comprehensive Toolkit for Healthcare Professionals

Robin Afnowich, MS, LPC

Caring for our Community Beyond the Bedside

Candace Garko, MSN, CENP, RNC-OB, C-EFM

David Barko, LCSW, PMH-C, IMH-E

Mindful Beginnings: Practical Newborn Neurodevelopmental Strategies for Every Setting

Jason Couch, DO

“I Heard it on Tik Tok:” Social Media and Obstetrics: Review of Current Trends and Practices in Obstetrics Sensationalized by Social Media

Natasha Patel, MD

Neonatal Bedside Hot Topics: Don’t Get Burned!

Andrea Hassler, MSN, RN, NEA-BC

Join us at our annual education conference. Learn more [online](#).



NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

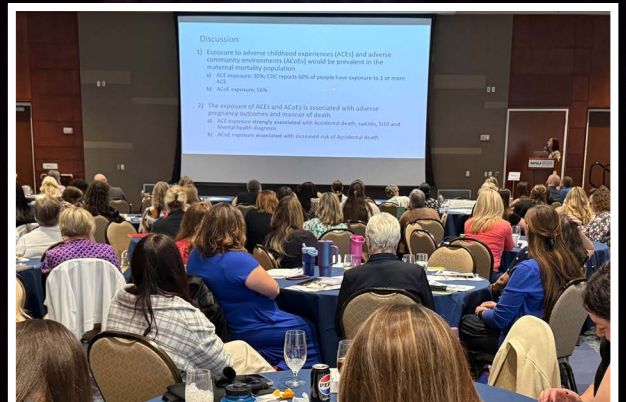


- Unplanned events
- Person purposely kills oneself
- Can be difficult to determine
- Person(s) kills another person
- Cannot be determined

Sarah Kellerhals, MD



Jason Couch, MD



Discussion

13. Exposure to adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and adverse reproductive environments (AREs) would be prevalent in the maternal mortality population

- ACE: 25%
- ARE: 20%
- CDC reports 50% of people have exposure to 1 or more
- ACE exposure link

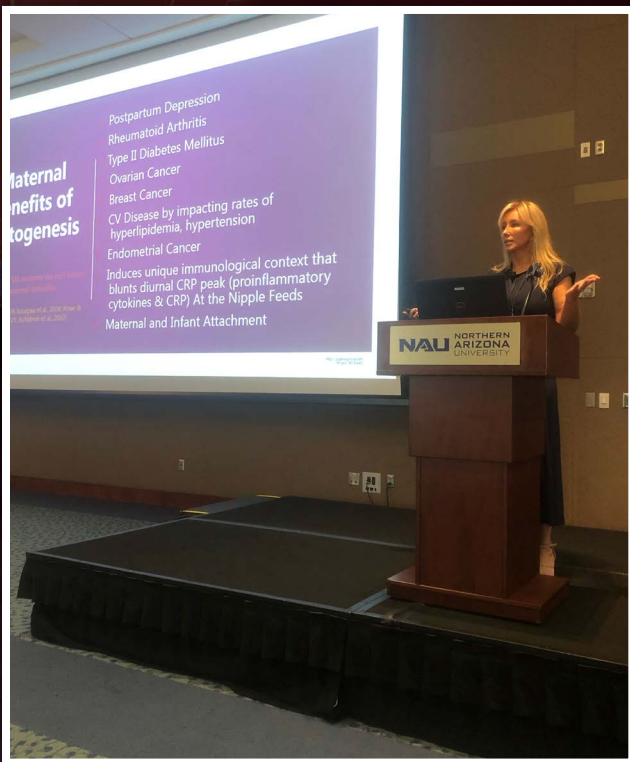
14. The exposure of ACEs and AREs is associated with adverse pregnancy outcomes and maternal death

- ACE exposure strongly associated with accidental death, suicide, and mental health diagnosis
- ARE exposure associated with increased risk of Accidental death



Annual Conference







ARIZONA NEONATOLOGY



Community





ty Partners





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