

NEWS RELEASE

Feinstein Institutes secures \$4M from NIH to study Black maternal health interventions

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MANHASSET, N.Y.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- From excessive bleeding to high blood pressure, even death, poor maternal health outcomes before or after delivery are at an all-time high across the United States, particularly for Black birthing people. Researchers at **The Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research** at **Northwell Health** were awarded \$4 million from the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR), part of the National Institutes of Health, to study effective maternal health interventions. The new research will evaluate the success of Northwell's integrated care approach, **The Maternal Outcomes (MOMs) Program**, and help determine what strategies should be scaled nationwide.

Feinstein Institutes' Dr. Stephanie L. Fitzpatrick is co-principal investigator on the new research to study maternal health outcomes interventions. (Credit: Feinstein Institutes)

Led by a team of care management coordinators and registered nurses, the MOMs

Program allows people who just gave birth to have access to clinical and behavioral health monitoring via an AI-powered chatbot and phone-based check-ins, including 24/7 access to a nurse and navigation to clinical and social services for 30 days post-delivery. Among 2,500 participants from 2020-2021, **the MOMs Program significantly reduced the risk** for severe maternal morbidity (SMM) related hospital admissions 30 days post-delivery by 77 percent among Black participants. While these preliminary findings are promising, long-term effectiveness needs to be established.

"Maternal morbidity and mortality rates continue to climb, especially among populations most impacted by health inequities. Through pragmatic research and implementation science informed through a health equity lens, we can better understand the most effective strategies to help improve health outcomes and reduce disparities," said **Stephanie L. Fitzpatrick, PhD**, co-principal investigator on the study, associate professor at the Feinstein Institutes'

Institute of Health System Science and Department of Medicine in the Zucker School of Medicine. “We know Northwell’s MOMs program works, and this new research will help us explore which aspects of the program are most critical to its success and which can be scaled and used nationwide.”

The new NINR-funded clinical study will examine two intensity levels: MOMs High-Touch (MOMs-HT) and MOMs Low-Touch (MOMs-LT). High-touch participants will get access to the MOMs’ AI-powered chatbot, in addition to clinical and behavioral health monitoring, 12 bi-weekly prenatal self-management support calls and 4 weekly postpartum clinical check-in calls. Women in the MOMs-LT group will also get access to the chatbot throughout the birthing continuum and four weekly postpartum clinical check-in calls. The research team will then note any SMM incidences and preeclampsia diagnoses, use questionnaires to help measure social support and use data from wearables to examine physical activity. The study has four main objectives:

- Compare MOMs-HT to MOMs-LT on the incidence of SMM at labor and delivery as well as the incidence of SMM-related hospital admissions at one month and one year postpartum.
- Compare study arms on time to documented preeclampsia diagnosis and initiation of treatment.
- Examine the effect of the two study arms on social support.
- Explore the role of physical activity from study enrollment to 1-year postpartum and subsequent association with maternal health outcomes.

“Maternal health research produces knowledge today to improve outcomes tomorrow,” said **Kevin J. Tracey, MD**, president and CEO of the Feinstein Institutes and Karches Family Distinguished Chair in Medical Research. “The NINR’s support to Dr. Fitzpatrick’s research will accelerate progress towards that goal.”

Northwell Health continues to make maternal health a priority. In 2022, the health system formed its **Center for Maternal Health**, led by **Dawnette Lewis, MD, MPH**. The Center drives forward the health system’s campaign to reduce the country’s maternal mortality rate by harnessing high-tech solutions like artificial intelligence-driven tools and collaborations with community provider organizations.

About the Feinstein Institutes

The Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research is the home of the research institutes of Northwell Health, the largest health care provider and private employer in New York State. Encompassing 50 research labs, 3,000 clinical research studies and 5,000 researchers and staff, the Feinstein Institutes raises the standard of medical innovation through its five institutes of behavioral science, bioelectronic medicine, cancer, health system science, and molecular medicine. We make breakthroughs in genetics, oncology, brain research, mental health, autoimmunity, and are the global scientific leader in bioelectronic medicine – a new field of science that has the potential to revolutionize medicine. For more information about how we produce knowledge to cure disease, visit

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