



**Prevention Research Center**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**UW–Madison Prevention Research Center receives \$5 million from CDC to improve maternal and child health outcomes in Wisconsin**

MADISON, Wis. – The University of Wisconsin–Madison Prevention Research Center has been awarded \$5 million in grant funding for the next five years from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to facilitate community-engaged research addressing maternal and child health disparities impacting Wisconsin communities. The grant is one of 20 awarded by the CDC as part of the Prevention Research Centers Program, a network of academic research centers studying how to reduce the risks of chronic diseases and other leading causes of death and disability in the United States.

The center first received CDC funding and became a member of the Prevention Research Centers Program in 2019. The mission of the center is to improve the health of women and birthing people, infants, and families impacted by health inequities by conducting and building capacity for high-quality applied health promotion and disease prevention research rooted in health equity.

“This funding is essential to moving forward with developing community-driven solutions to maternal and child health inequities,” said Jill Denson, director of the center who holds a doctorate in public health with a specialization in community and behavioral health promotion. “Researchers and collaborators throughout the state will continue working together to learn about the health issues that affect Wisconsin families and to translate research findings into practice.”

Funding will support research, community engagement, evaluation, and training to improve health outcomes and reduce health risks and deaths related to pregnancy, the postpartum period and infancy throughout the state. The center will partner with researchers, community advisory boards, community-based organizations, healthcare organizations, and state programs to develop, test and evaluate solutions to maternal and child health issues identified by community members with lived experience. Based on the recommendations of partners, findings will be implemented into practice and used to inform policy.

Funding will additionally support the primary research project of the center, known as the Core Research Project, led by Dr. Kara Hoppe, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health, and Andy Garbacz, professor in educational psychology at UW–Madison and faculty in the UW Institute for Clinical and Translational Research who has a doctorate in psychological studies in education. The project seeks to reduce racial health disparities and improve maternal and infant health outcomes for Black women. In Wisconsin, Black women experience higher incidences of hypertension in pregnancy and face alarming maternal mortality rates three to four times higher than non-Black women. The project will expand access to the Staying healthy After Childbirth program, or STAC. The evidence-based program is designed to monitor blood pressure during pregnancy and after birth to decrease health complications and hospital readmissions of pregnant and postpartum people. Community members will help to culturally adapt and implement the program to provide remote pregnancy support and blood pressure care in community-based organizations, such as doula organizations and public health departments.

The grant is set to begin this fall and will fund the center and Core Research Project through September 2029.

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## **University of Wisconsin–Madison Prevention Research Center**

The mission of the [University of Wisconsin–Madison Prevention Research Center](#) is to improve the health of women and birthing people, infants, and families impacted by health inequities by conducting and building capacity for high-quality applied health promotion and disease prevention research rooted in health equity. The center is a member of the [Prevention Research Centers Program](#), and is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services cooperative agreement number U48DP006793. Additional funding is provided by the UW School of Medicine and Public Health, Department of Pediatrics, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government.