



MHN Commitment to Health Equity

At the MHN Summit, held on June 28, 2022, participants were presented the **STAND Pledge** and offered examples of how each declaration within the pledge could be supported by action. In a break-out, participants were asked to discuss and document both **CURRENT** action as well as **FUTURE** opportunities to support each declaration that makes up the stand pledge. The results of these discussions are below.

Equity in Action

S

I pledge to create a **SAFE** and **SECURE** environment that is **SILENT OF THE BIASES** that have been normalized in our communities; an environment that allows birthing families to advocate for themselves and their baby in care and treatment; an environment that is **SUPPORTIVE** and respectful to the birthing process and the family.

Examples of how to mobilize this declaration:

- **Partnership Building:** Lead with rapport building, minimize power dynamics and reframe each interaction with your client as one of collaboration toward a shared interest (their health).
- **Lead with Choice:** Provide birthing families with the full scope of options, and informed consent, as it pertains to their birthing experience (i.e., choosing a provider, how to deliver, pain management, and feeding choices.)
- **Establish a Verbal Contract:** When we are in this space together, we will respect each other's opinions and be supportive of each other.
- **Establish Informed Consent:** Families and patients are given information to make their own decisions and will be supported in such decisions, regardless of whether the provider agrees or disagrees.
- **Provide Culturally Specific Care:** Provide resources that are specifically targeted to a family's identify.

T

I pledge to embody **TRUST** in the birthing person while implementing agency care; to participate in the **TRANSFORMATION** of practice to the point that **cultural competency, congruency, humility, accountability, and integrity** are social norms.

Examples of how to mobilize this declaration:

- **Believe Birthing People:** Preventable health complications can often be detected when time is allotted to address concerns early on and patients are listened to. Create a space for concerns and questions, before and between appointments.
- **Collect Stories and Data:** Seek out feedback from birthing individuals and their families to explore how well you/your organization is providing equitable and culturally safe practices and spaces.



Equity in Action

A

I pledge to be **AWARE** of and **ACKNOWLEDGE** biases, blind spots, and cultural insensitivity; to **ACCEPT** and **ADHERE** to the Black Birthing Billing of Rights.

Examples of how to mobilize this declaration:

- **Take Personal Responsibility:** Conduct self-assessments to recognize my explicit and implicit biases. Be mindful about when these biases show up and actively work to reframe my own perspective.
- **Get Curious:** Seek out information, trainings, and real-life experiences with people from other backgrounds to expand my own perspective.

N

I pledge to **NOTICE** and respond to the **NEEDS** of the birthing person as an individual; to aid in **NAVIGATING** local resources.

Examples of how to mobilize this declaration:

- **Pay Attention and Respond:** Listen and respond to concerns that are raised by black birthing individuals during and between appointments. Validate their experience and seek out a solution that supports their unique situation and needs.
- **Partner with Doulas and Midwives:** Develop partnerships with community doulas to increase opportunities for birthing individuals to work with a non-medical perinatal support person who can provide family-centered, individualized care and education throughout the perinatal process. Collaborate with community midwives, to foster relationships and continuity of care between perinatal providers at the community and hospital level.

D

I pledge to embrace **DIVERSITY** of practice and practitioners in care, and to deescalate as a first response to patient challenges.

Examples of how to mobilize this declaration:

- **Demand Diversity in the Workforce:** Recognize the value of having practitioners of various races/ethnicities/identities and call on your organization to hire, nurture and promote more practitioners of color and diversity.
- **Assume Positive Intent:** When a black or socially marginalized birthing individual presents a challenge, assume the communication or behavior is self-protective and an indication that you need to create more rapport, safety and space for information sharing. Work towards a solution that centers their needs and concerns.