



The Center for Great Expectations is proud of its long-standing partnership with RWJBarnabas Health to provide integrated mental health and substance use treatment for pregnant and postpartum women. For more than 25 years, we have combined trauma-informed treatment with early relational health counseling to deliver a comprehensive model of care that treats both mother and child. With two residential homes for pregnant and parenting women and adolescents, an on-site Child Development Center, Permanent Supportive Housing, an in-home community-based program for pregnant and postpartum women, and an outpatient clinic, we are uniquely positioned to support families across the continuum of care. Our collaboration with RWJBarnabas allows us to expand awareness of trauma-informed, relational care and to provide training for OB/GYN practitioners, equipping them with the tools to compassionately address the complex needs of women experiencing mental health challenges and substance use disorders. As partners, our treatment teams extend care beyond clinical settings and into the community.

Mental health conditions, including substance use disorders, are the leading cause of maternal mortality, and more than 80 percent of maternal deaths are preventable. By partnering with a leading healthcare provider, we are building a community-based early relational health ecosystem designed to decrease maternal mortality, reduce substance use, and improve maternal and infant mental health outcomes. This partnership integrates RWJBarnabas's OB/GYN services with CGE's expertise in community-based clinical and supportive care, allowing us to serve forty families each year. CGE provides training to increase provider understanding of the intersection of trauma, mental health, and substance use, reduce stigma, and strengthen providers' capacity to engage pregnant patients in meaningful and responsive care. Services are delivered in clients' homes, RWJBarnabas clinics, and other community settings. Families receive services free of charge for up to 18 months, with up to three visits per week, including relationship-based substance use counseling, peer recovery support, integrated doula care and case management, and medication management. Ensuring that mothers and babies receive compassionate mental and physical health care during pregnancy and the postpartum period is essential to achieving equitable outcomes for vulnerable families.

Services are currently offered in the greater Essex County area, with plans to expand into Ocean County. However, without continued funding from RWJBarnabas, the likelihood of sustaining this collaborative program is limited. Pregnant and postpartum women represent one of our most valued and vulnerable populations, and together with RWJBarnabas, we make a meaningful difference in their lives.

We are deeply grateful for the years of leadership and financial support provided by RWJBarnabas Health. Mark Manigan and Suzanne Spernal, members of the RWJBarnabas executive team, serve on The Center for Great Expectations Board of Trustees, further strengthening the connection between our organizations. We share a commitment to improving maternal health, nurturing children, and advancing outcomes for the next generation, and we look forward to many more years of impactful collaboration.

Sincerely,

Peg Wright
President/CEO
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