

**Building the Movement for
Perinatal Mental Health & Justice in California**
A Dialogue With Funders

California Perinatal Wellness Alliance, October 8, 2025

Welcome to Building the Movement for Perinatal Mental Health & Justice in California

While we wait for folks to join us, please share in the Zoom chat:

- Your name
- Your organization
- What brings you to this conversation on building the movement for perinatal mental health and justice?



vimeo



Agenda

- Opening Remarks
- Survivor Spotlight
- Partner Perspectives
- Call to Action
- Funder Dialogue
- Closing

Building the Movement:

Perinatal Mental Health & Justice in California

Join us for a funder dialogue on the movement for perinatal mental health and justice in California and beyond, featuring community-led stories and solutions.



Webinar

Wednesday, October 8, 2025
12:00 pm PT / 3:00 pm ET



Opening Remarks

Cassie Manjikian

CPWA Co-Founder & Director

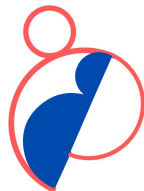


My “Pain to Power” Story

- “Perfect” pregnancy
- Missed risk factors



BLACK WOMEN
FOR WELLNESS



CALIFORNIA
PERINATAL
WELLNESS ALLIANCE



Postpartum Support International
California Chapter

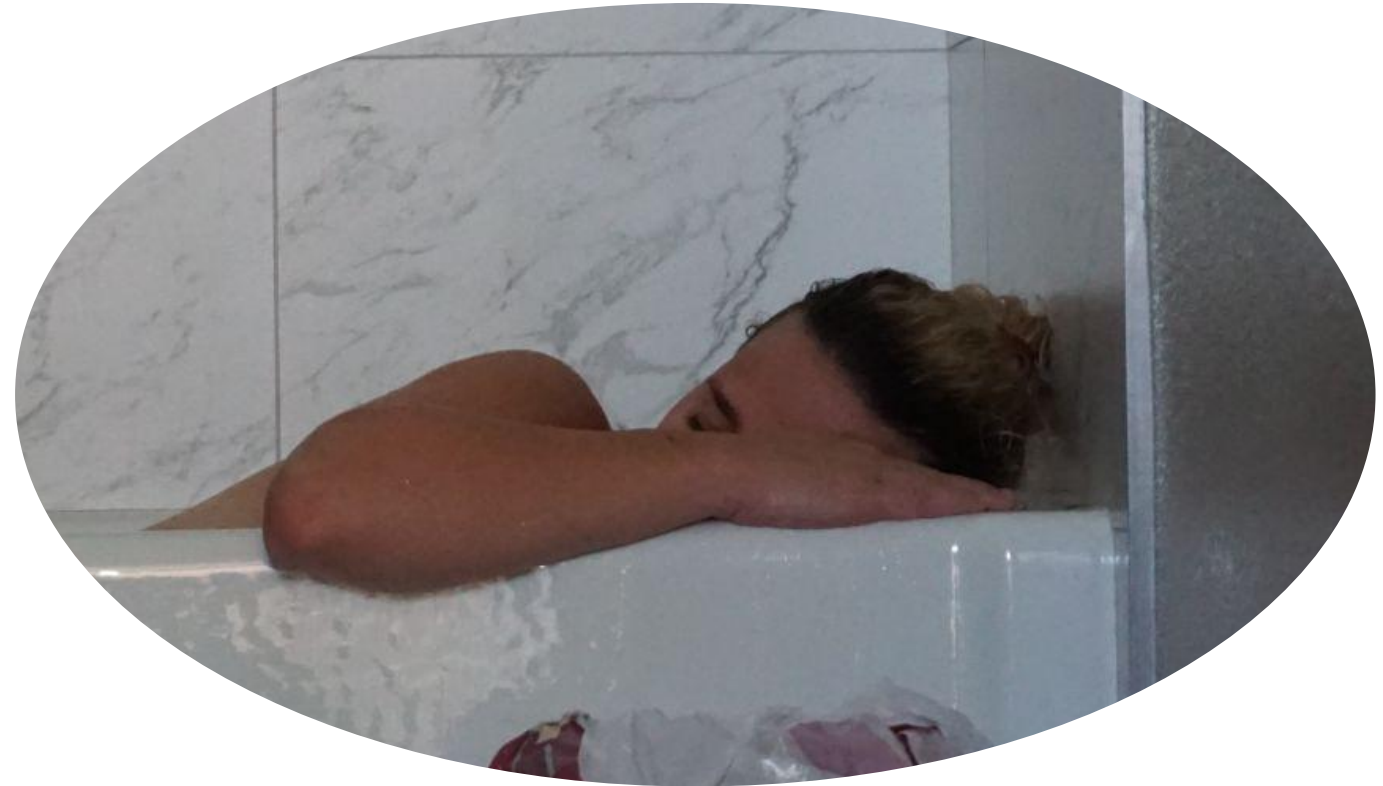


MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH NOW
supporting the well-being of growing families

A Project of Community Partners

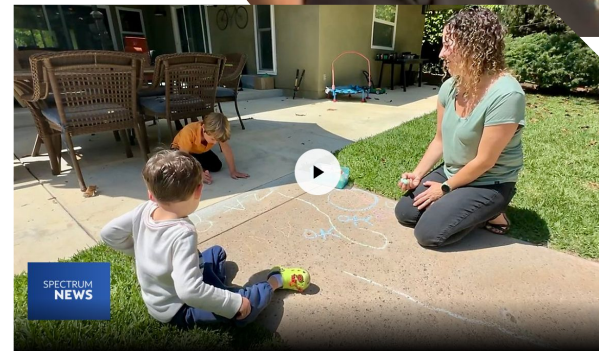
Postpartum Psychosis

- Five sleepless days → psychosis
- Traumatic, siloed hospital care
- Seven-year recovery, \$30K out-of-pocket
- Black women: 4x higher risk of maternal death



Storytelling as Medicine

- Sharing my story in *The Imperfect Mothers Club* documentary
- Storytelling with Maternal Mental Health NOW



SPECTRUM NEWS

1 in 5 women will suffer from a mental health issue after pregnancy



From Pain to Power – Los Angeles

- Oct 2024: 200 survivors, providers & policymakers
- Reimagining a just perinatal-mental-health system
- Birthplace → **California Perinatal Wellness Alliance**



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SB 626 (Smallwood-Cuevas)

- Strengthens screening & care coordination
- Shifts language from “maternal” to “perinatal” mental health



Pain To Power Advocacy Day – Sacramento

- April 2025: 40 advocates, 25 survivors, 51 meetings
- SB 626 passed Senate Health Committee *unanimously*
- Rep. Senator Valladares shared her story



The Urgent Need for Change

- Perinatal mental health conditions are the **most common complication of pregnancy**, and the **leading cause of maternal mortality** in the U.S.
- Affect **1 in 5 mothers and 1 in 10 fathers**; only **15% receive treatment**
- Untreated PMH conditions lead to higher suicide rates, poor birth outcomes, **\$2.4 B** annual cost to CA – with **BIPOC & low-income families** hit hardest
- Due to stigma, little public awareness, limited provider training, lack of follow-up
- These aren't individual failures — it's a preventable public health crisis



California is at a Pivotal Moment for Maternal Health

- SB 626: unanimous support, held for alignment
- Birthing Care Pathway
- California's Maternal Health Blueprint
- Proposition 1
- Most impacted communities must lead
- This is our moment to align policy, funding & systems change

CALIFORNIA SENATE BILL 626

This bill would require a licensed health care practitioner who provides perinatal care for a patient to *screen, diagnose, and treat the patient for a maternal mental health condition.*



California's Maternal Health Blueprint 2024



OFFICE OF THE CALIFORNIA SURGEON GENERAL



The California Perinatal Wellness Alliance (CPWA)

- Survivor- and community-led statewide alliance
- 20+ partners, 600+ advocates
- No direct services; build connective tissue
- Strategies:
 - Policy & systems change
 - Storytelling & narrative shift
 - Convenings & movement-building
- When families thrive, communities thrive

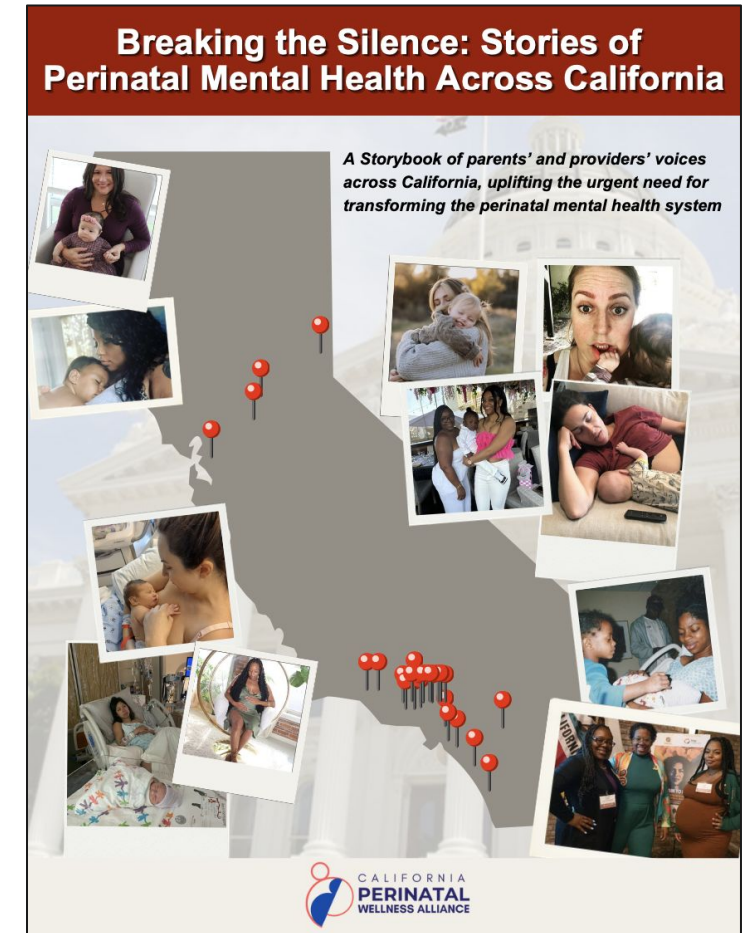


Policy Strategy Committee



Co-Creating This Movement

- Built through donated time & lived experience
- Fiscal sponsorship by SEE, no core funding
- New CA Storybook of 30 survivor stories
- Inviting funders to co-create next chapter
- We can make CA a model for healing & justice



Survivor Spotlight

Diamond Lee
LA MotherBoard



Survivor Spotlight – LA MotherBoard

Jade Ross
LA MotherBoard



Yvonne Nettles
LA MotherBoard



Felicia Burkley
LA MotherBoard



CPWA Partner Perspectives

Kimberly Gray

Maternal Mental Health
NOW



Elyse Springer

Postpartum Support
International-CA



LaKisha Cameese

Black Women for
Wellness



Call To Action

Diamond Lee
LA MotherBoard



Investing in the Movement

- Everything shared today – from stories to policy wins – was built through donated time, talent, and lived experience.
- Now we're seeking values-aligned funders to:
 - Build CPWA's backbone infrastructure
 - Strengthen coordination, communications & community engagement
 - Honor storytellers whose voices drive change



**Policy & Systems
Change**



**Storytelling &
Narrative Shift**



**Convenings &
Movement-Building**



Funder Dialogue – Co-Creating What Comes Next

- What resonated most with you today?
- What possibilities do you see for partnership or collaboration?
- How might we grow or strengthen this movement?
- What feels most meaningful to invest in right now?
- What or who are we missing in this conversation?
- How can we be responsive to the challenges you're facing as funders in this moment?



Thank You & Next Steps

- Share your feedback on today's webinar
- Stay tuned for CPWA's follow-up email
- Help grow our movement
- Connect with us
 - CPWA website: <https://calpwa.org>
 - Cassie Gardener Manjikian, CPWA: cassie@calpwa.org
 - Kimberly Gray, Maternal Mental Health NOW: kimberly@maternalmentalhealthnow.org
 - Elyse Springer, Postpartum Support International-CA: Espringer@psicachapter.com
 - LaKisha Cameese, Black Women for Wellness: lakisha@bwwla.com
 - Diamond Lee, MotherBoard: diamond@liberationbydesign.com

