

My name is Eugenia Montesinos Midwife from Metropolitan Hospital, one of the 11 city Hospitals that serves our NYC families.

I am representing NYC Midwives; we are here to support the New York Health Act (A.5248.S.3577) which is critical and vital to keep our families healthy.

Midwives have been a vital and growing part of the advancement of women's health in New York and are collectively responsible for 10.2 % as of December 31, 2016 (percent of all births in New York State).

We provide primary care, well women Gynecology, family planning, pregnancy, childbirth and newborn care.

I have been working for 20 years and it is shameful that to this day we do not implement universal health care to all.

Health starts at the womb, and as midwives, we believe and support that New York Maternal Health is necessary for our mothers. If you have a healthy mother you will have a healthy baby, and healthy family, especially in our marginalized populations.

Health Care is the right for everyone, not a privilege, and is essential in our everyday life. It helps with preventive care, avoiding increasing costs with ER visits or the money it takes to cure illnesses. As for our women, it can avoid teenage pregnancies, abortions, pre-terms, diabetes, and pre-eclampsia that leads to an increased morbidity rate in our mothers.

It is shameful that The Bronx is one of the boroughs that has the highest, up to 25.6% increase rate of teenage pregnancies, the highest in low birth weight, increased infant mortality, increased maternal mortality up to 12% while decrease by 31% in NYC, increased obesity, increased diabetes, increased hypertension (2.5 times higher compared to NY), lower breastfeeding rates, overall, women have poor prenatal care at any trimester than in any other borough in NYC. All this is due to a lack of universal healthcare.

Our approach along with Universal health care, listening to women, respecting their insights, and recognizing them as experts in their health is reflected in the midwifery model of care, and can serve as an accessible solution to improve maternal health and the growing problem of health inequity.

