

Engaging a lived experience advisory group in the evaluation of a maternal telehealth access project during the COVID-19 pandemic

What factors influence the engagement of people with the lived experience advisory group in a maternal health project?

The Maternal Telehealth Access Project (MTAP) aimed to increase access to virtual perinatal services.

APPLIED FRAMEWORKS

- Results Based Accountability
- Principles of Culturally Responsive Evaluation

A critical part of the approach included engaging community members in the Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG).

13 LEAG members are parents, doulas, community health workers and advocates from communities impacted by maternal health inequities. The majority of LEAG members identified as Black/African American, one member identified as white, and one member identified as Latinx.

DEVELOPMENT & GOALS

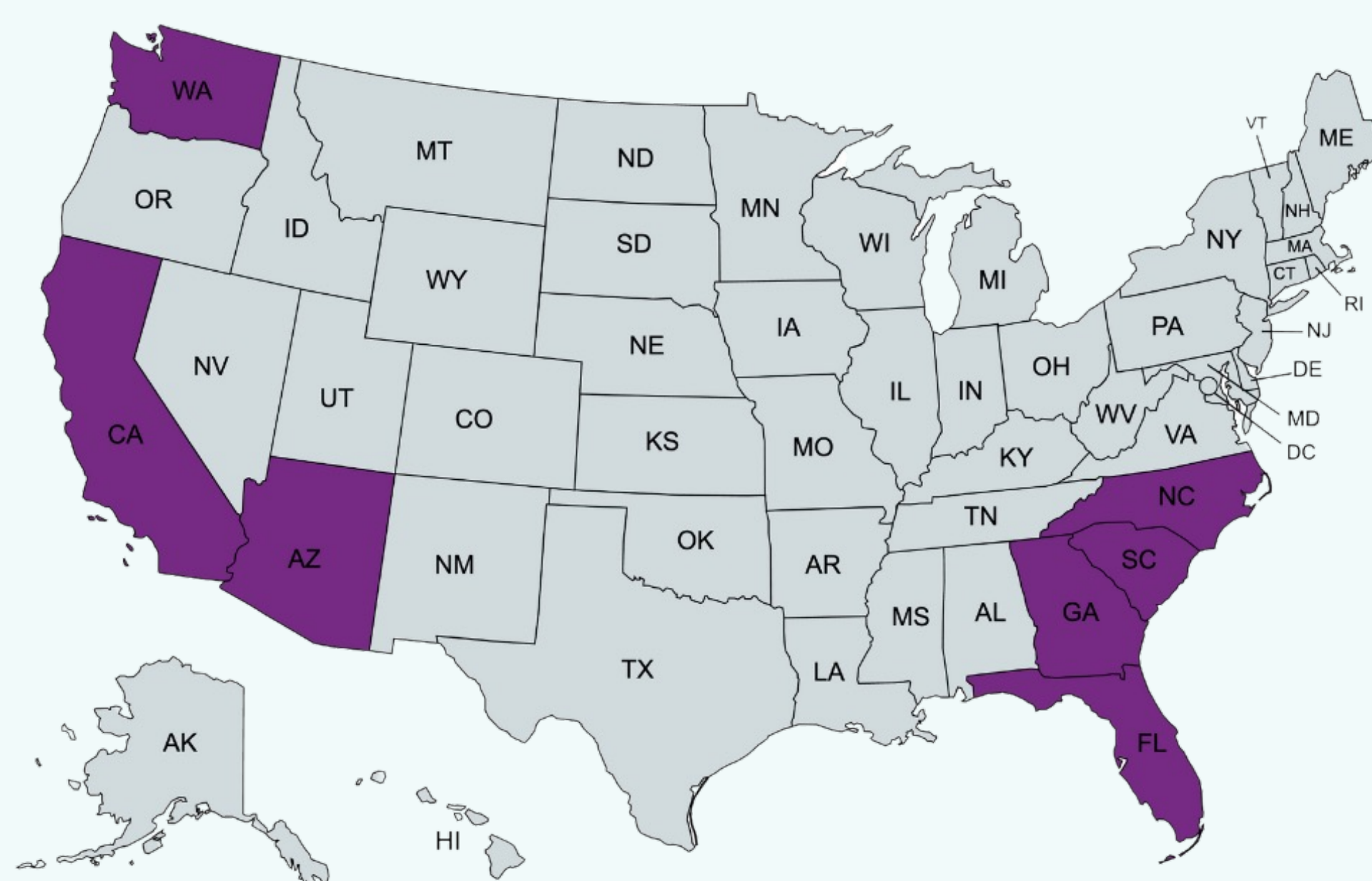
LEAG members were nominated by MTAP collaborative partners who understood the cultural and historical contexts of the communities which MTAP was trying to reach and provided input and feedback on the LEAG engagement process. An e-nomination flyer that included information about expectations of LEAG members and LEAG compensation was shared with maternal health partners.

The purpose of the evaluation was to understand how well MTAP funding met the needs of the intended communities and to understand how well MTAP met the intended goals and objectives of the telehealth project.

MTAP supported women at greatest risk of maternal mortality and morbidity, including people who were pregnant and giving birth who are people of color, and people who live in rural and frontier communities.



LEAG Members live across the US. Six identify their communities as rural.



LIMITATIONS

Burnout. These feelings were exacerbated by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Communication complexities due to multiple partners and limited communication.

Engage people from American Indian/Native American communities.

FACTORS

10 LEAG members responded to a follow up survey. The responses below indicate the factors that are a critical part of LEAG engagement. The survey asked LEAG members how much they agree or disagree with the six factors. 1=strongly agree and 4=strongly disagree

| | MEAN | Number who strongly agree or agree |
|---|------|------------------------------------|
| I understand the purpose and goals of MTAP | 1.42 | 10 |
| I felt that my contributions were valued by the MTAP evaluation team and partners | 1.33 | 10 |
| I felt that my feedback on the MTAP monthly summary report was useful to the overall evaluation | 1.67 | 9 |
| The MTAP evaluation team and partners listened to my concerns and feedback | 1.17 | 10 |
| The MTAP evaluation team and partners responded to and/or acted upon my concerns and feedback | 1.33 | 10 |
| I valued my experience on the LEAG | 1.17 | 10 |



Acknowledgments

Contributions by LEAG Members

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CONCLUSIONS

The findings in this report underscore the importance of engaging people with the lived experience as a mutually beneficial learning opportunity and experience, for participants and MTAP collaborating partners. In the review of the literature, only one example existed about engaging people with the lived experience in the context of a maternal health evaluation. However, the MTAP LEAG findings suggest that people with the lived experience are eager and excited to provide feedback to an evaluation and have the capacity to make meaningful and insightful contributions to all phases of an evaluation.



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