

Meridian Partners with Mae to Improve Maternal Outcomes and Reduce Disparities Across Michigan - Sep 19, 2024

*Partnership aims to improve access to doula care and address the cultural needs of Medicaid members during pregnancy and postpartum*

DETROIT, Sept. 19, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- [Meridian](#), a leading managed care organization in the state of Michigan and a [Centene Corporation](#) company (NYSE: CNC), has partnered with [Mae](#), a culturally responsive digital solution built to address the specific clinical, social and cultural needs of underserved expectant mothers, to provide supplementary support for the maternal health needs of all eligible pregnant and postpartum members. Mae will connect Meridian's Medicaid members with its growing network of over 50 Michigan-based doulas for virtual and in-person emotional support, labor education, advocacy, lactation support and postpartum management.

By launching a partnership with Mae in July to increase access to doula support and other services, Meridian works toward its commitment to reduce disparities in maternal outcomes and improve the overall perinatal health outcomes in Michigan, where [Black women are more than twice as likely than white women to die from maternal-related complications](#)

"We are pleased to offer this much-needed additional service to our eligible members and doulas," said Dianalynn Smith, Meridian's Vice President, Quality Improvement. "As a major source of coverage for low-income people, Medicaid has a critical role to play in reducing health disparities, both locally and nationally. Meridian is responsible for nearly 10%, or 1 in 9, of all births in Michigan. While pregnancy can be a beautiful journey, it can also be a very stressful time, both physically and mentally. Community-based doulas provide culturally and racially resonant care through a shared background, culture and language with pregnant people."

According to [The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists](#), one-on-one emotional support provided by doulas has been shown to reduce cesarean births, help shorten the duration of labor and improve the rate of spontaneous vaginal birth. Doula services are an evidenced-based intervention key in addressing the alarming rise in maternity care deserts, with an [estimated 16% of Black babies born in Michigan in areas with limited or no access to maternity care services](#). Doulas have been [proven](#) to improve maternal health outcomes and reduce complications and ineffective interventions, while driving down costs for the broader healthcare ecosystem.

To support Meridian members, Mae combines a digital engagement and risk-tracking platform with community-based doula support to better align provider support teams and center the pregnant person throughout the perinatal journey, all with the goal of reducing disparate maternal health outcomes, including preterm births and non-medically necessary C-sections.

"Over the past two years, Mae has built a meaningful presence in Michigan, partnering with a growing team of extraordinary community-based doulas to serve the needs of Medicaid beneficiaries across the state," said Maya Hardigan, Chief Executive Officer of Mae. "We are thrilled to launch our partnership with Meridian to expand our reach to birthing individuals in Michigan and to drive improvements in maternal health outcomes and equity. We look forward to the impact we will make together."

#### **About Meridian**

[Meridian in Michigan](#) provides government-sponsored managed care services to families, children, seniors and individuals with complex medical needs primarily through Medicaid (Meridian), Medicare Advantage and Medicare Prescription Drug Plans (Wellcare), Medicare-Medicaid Plans (MeridianComplete) and the Health Insurance Marketplace (Ambetter from Meridian). Meridian is a Centene Corporation company, a leading healthcare enterprise committed to helping people live healthier lives. For more information about Meridian, please visit [mimeridian.com](https://mimeridian.com).

#### **About Mae**

Mae is a culturally responsive digital first solution built to address the specific clinical, social and cultural needs of underserved expectant mothers, with an early focus on Black expectant mothers, those with the most striking disparities in maternal health outcomes. Mae has created a space where complete digital care meets culturally aligned on-the-ground doula support. For more information, please visit [meetmae.com](https://meetmae.com).

SOURCE Meridian of Michigan

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