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PRESS RELEASE

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April 12, 2024

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## NJEDA BOARD APPROVES ANCHOR TENANTS FOR MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH INNOVATION CENTER

*Rutgers University, Capital Health & Trenton Health Team to Take on Leadership Roles at the Trenton-based center, a centerpiece of First Lady Murphy's Nurture NJ initiative*

TRENTON, N.J. (April 12, 2024) – The [New Jersey Economic Development Authority](#) (NJEDA) Board on Wednesday approved [three anchor tenants](#) to lead the [Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center](#) (MIHIC) in Trenton. These entities, [Rutgers](#), the [State University of New Jersey](#); [Capital Health](#); and [Trenton Health Team](#), will work collaboratively to provide services focused on addressing a myriad of issues around maternal and infant health in Trenton and across New Jersey, including pre- and post-natal clinical services; education programs to cultivate the perinatal workforce; and social and wrap-around services. The NJEDA is developing the MIHIC in partnership with the Office of First Lady Tammy Murphy and the newly established Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority (MIHIA) which will oversee the MIHIC's day-to-day operations long term.

The MIHIC is a central component to First Lady Tammy Murphy's [Nurture NJ](#) initiative and will serve as a hub for New Jersey's stakeholders dedicated to eliminating racial disparities and advancing maternal health equity in the state. The Board approved Capital Health as the Lead Healthcare Clinical Services Provider, Rutgers University as the Lead Institution of Higher Education, and Trenton Health Team as the Lead Trenton-Based Multi-Service Organization. A total of \$75 million in state and federal funds has been allocated to support the construction of the Center.

"The Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center will truly be a one-of-a-kind hub for developing groundbreaking solutions to our maternal health crisis and ensuring we address the inequities in health care once and for all," **said First Lady Tammy Murphy**. "At the same time, this center will provide critical maternal and infant health services to Trenton and New Jersey residents, transforming the maternal health landscape locally, across our state, and ultimately, we hope, for the nation. Most importantly, the Center and the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Authority will continue our vital work long after the Murphy administration, ensuring all New Jersey moms and babies are able to receive the highest quality care for generations to come, and helping us reach our goal and becoming the safest state in the nation to deliver and raise a baby."

To ensure the MIHIC meets the needs of the Trenton community, the NJEDA partnered with the John S. Watson Institute for Urban Policy and Research at Kean University to lead community engagement efforts to

inform the development of the Center. The Watson Institute has been leading an interactive, iterative, and open dialogue process with Trenton residents and stakeholders to better understand current programs and service offerings for expectant mothers and infants as well as gaps in service, opportunities to leverage existing community assets, and an ideal location for Trenton residents. This ongoing community engagement process will play a key role in informing the Center's design and service delivery models, working in partnership with the Lead tenants, MIHIA and NJEDA.

"Under Governor Phil Murphy and First Lady Murphy's leadership, the NJEDA and MIHIA have been committed to working with premiere health, education, and non-profit professionals to best serve the City of Trenton," **said NJEDA Chief Executive Officer Tim Sullivan.** "To have leaders like Capital Health, Rutgers University, and Trenton Health Team as partners in this endeavor is an incredible victory for the families of Trenton and it will further the NJEDA and MIHIA's mission to provide top-of-the-line care. The Center is well-positioned to have a long-lasting impact on the health and wellbeing of the Trenton community for years to come."

"The ultimate priority of the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center is advocating for communities that have long-faced disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes due to lack of access to health care services," **said Lisa Asare, who was recently appointed President and CEO of the MIHIA by Governor Murphy.** "The MIHIA Board and I are excited to work alongside leading organizations that will provide quality health care services and education to residents who need it most. When we care for parents and infants, we give them the tools to live healthy, full lives."

Rutgers University, which was selected as the Lead Institution of Higher Education, will provide a variety of services, including accredited degree programs, certification programs, non-degree programs, on-the-job training opportunities, student support services and maternal and infant health research. The School of Nursing, within Rutgers Health will lead the Higher Education Consortium at MIHIC, alongside Mercer County Community College, Stockton University, the College of New Jersey and Thomas Edison State University. Princeton University will collaborate in future research and policy endeavors.

As Lead Healthcare Clinical Services Provider, Capital Health will offer clinical care to Trenton residents focused on maternal and infant wellbeing and health equity, as well as provide prenatal and postpartum care, newborn and pediatric care, mental and behavioral health care, doula and lactation services, telehealth services, and obstetrics and gynecology.

Trenton Health Team, a non-profit which uses a data-driven approach to work with community groups to assess their health care needs, will serve as the Lead Trenton-Based Multi-Service Organization and focus on providing services that directly impact social determinants of health such as food security, housing, and transportation. Trenton Health Team, which serves as one of the four regional health hubs, has been recognized as an innovative force in the field of urban health care reform, as they have pinpointed gaps and barriers to service, and identified ways to improve delivery of preventative and remedial services.

"I welcome Capital Health, Rutgers University, and the Trenton Health Team to the Maternal Health Innovation Center and look forward to their partnership as we make Trenton a hub for maternal care best practices," **said Senator Shirley Turner (D-Mercer).** "With their expertise, we will provide quality healthcare services, expand the perinatal workforce, and address racial disparities so that mothers and their babies have a fair chance at life in every community across New Jersey. Ending the maternal and infant mortality epidemic in our State must be a collaborative effort, and I believe we are bringing together a team that will make this a reality."

"With the approval of Capital Health, Rutgers University, and Trenton Health Team as anchor tenants, the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center is poised to catalyze remarkable innovations that will improve the health of New Jersey's mothers and babies," **said Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson (D-Mercer).** "As an Assemblywoman, I feel deep satisfaction in witnessing the fruition of our legislation become a

tangible beacon of hope. As a lifelong resident of Trenton, I am proud of our city's contribution toward the elimination of racial disparities and promotion of health equity statewide."

"With the announcement of these new anchor tenants, The Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center is poised to become a vital institution in our Capital City," **said Mercer County Executive Dan Benson.** "The MIHIC will bring immense benefits to patients here in Mercer County, while developing the tools we need to combat maternal and infant mortality, and to work towards eliminating racial inequity in maternal health outcomes across New Jersey. When we build collaborative relationships between government and all of our community stakeholders, we can tackle some of our greatest challenges."

"As Mayor of Trenton, I am thrilled to see the progression of the Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center. With Capital Health, Rutgers University, and Trenton Health Team at the forefront, this collaborative effort promises a brighter, healthier future for our community and beyond," **said Mayor Reed Gusciora.** "By addressing critical issues surrounding maternal and infant health with a focus on equity, this center aligns perfectly with our city's commitment to inclusive and accessible healthcare for all. I commend the dedication of the First Lady and her health team, and I look forward to the positive impact this initiative will have on the lives of families in Trenton and across New Jersey."

"Rutgers Health is proud to partner with the state to provide vital maternal and infant health care to our community through this new center. As the state university of New Jersey, Rutgers brings significant value to this program and we are committed to advancing maternal health equity for our community. We are honored to have been selected as the Lead Institution of Higher Education and are excited to contribute our innovative expertise to this important initiative," **said Brian Strom, chancellor of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences, who leads Rutgers Health.**

"For over 125 years, Capital Health has cared for the residents of Trenton and we are deeply committed to ensuring access to safe, high-quality care for expectant and new parents and their babies," **said Al Maghazehe, President and CEO of Capital Health.** "The Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center is a visionary opportunity to deliver much needed clinical, educational, and social services in Trenton. I want to thank First Lady Tammy Murphy for her commitment and vision. Together, we can have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of our community."

"Trenton Health Team is immensely grateful for the opportunity to serve as the Lead Trenton-based Multi-Service Organization for this innovative Center," **said Trenton Health Team CEO Gregory Paulson.** "Along with our many community and faith-based partners that bring tremendous expertise and experience in maternal health, THT has worked on numerous projects meant to improve maternal health outcomes in our city and beyond, particularly for Black and Brown birthing people. This pivotal opportunity will help us directly engage with community members in need of services that impact their daily lives, beyond just healthcare. Together, we remain steadfast in our commitment to driving tangible change and fostering a future where every individual, parent, child, family, friend, or neighbor – has the opportunity to thrive in New Jersey."

### **About the NJEDA**

The New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) serves as the State's principal agency for driving economic growth. The NJEDA is committed to making New Jersey a national model for inclusive and sustainable economic development by focusing on key strategies to help build strong and dynamic communities, create good jobs for New Jersey residents, and provide pathways to a stronger and fairer economy. Through partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders, the NJEDA creates and implements initiatives to enhance the economic vitality and quality of life in the State and strengthen New Jersey's long-term economic competitiveness.

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