

Governor Phil Murphy

First Lady Tammy Murphy to Host Facebook Live Interview with Dr. Lisa Gittens-Williams to Share Information for Women Navigating Pregnancy During COVID-19 Global Pandemic

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TRENTON – First Lady Tammy Murphy will host a Facebook Live interview, tomorrow, April 21, at 3:30 p.m., with Dr. Lisa Gittens-Williams to share information for women navigating pregnancy during the COVID-19 global pandemic. “Ask an OBGYN,” which will be livestreamed from the First Lady’s Facebook page, will offer guidance on how a mother can prevent contracting COVID-19, obtain prenatal care, have a safe and healthy delivery, and manage COVID-19 during and after pregnancy. The interview will address the current maternal and infant health crisis in New Jersey and the health disparities that continue to be exacerbated by the COVID-19 outbreak. The interview is part of Nurture NJ, the First Lady’s statewide awareness campaign to combat the maternal and infant health crisis in New Jersey. Currently, New Jersey ranks 47th in the nation for maternal deaths.

“The COVID-19 global pandemic adds significant risks and challenges to combatting the black maternal and infant health crisis in New Jersey,” **said First Lady Tammy Murphy**. “The COVID-19 crisis is exacerbating our health disparities, proving we must continue our work to improve the health of our mothers and babies. This interview with Dr. Gittens-Williams will offer guidance and share information to better prepare expectant mothers to protect themselves and their babies throughout pregnancy, delivery, and after they bring their little one home.”

“Pregnancy and a newborn baby are enough to keep you up at night. Pregnant women and their families deserve help navigating the landscape of COVID-19,” **said Dr. Lisa Gittens-Williams**. “As women meet health care providers, who are wearing masks and face shields, they need to know that they are still being seen through the lens of health equity.”

Dr. Lisa Gittens-Williams is a Professor in the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Women’s Health at Rutgers NJ Medical School. She is a Maternal Fetal Medicine specialist and is the Director of Obstetrics at University Hospital, Newark, NJ. She serves as the chair of Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Committee for ACOG (American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology) District III.

In New Jersey, a black woman is five times more likely than a white woman to die of pregnancy-related complications and a black baby is three times more likely than a white baby to die before his or her first birthday. This is one of the widest racial disparities in the nation.

Nurture NJ, which is devoted to serving every mother, every baby, and every family in New Jersey, includes a

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multi-pronged, multi-agency approach to improve maternal and infant health. The campaign focuses on improving collaboration and programming between departments, agencies, and stakeholders to achieve its goal of making New Jersey the safest place in the country to give birth and raise a baby. Nurture NJ initiatives include an annual Black Maternal and Infant Health Leadership Summit; the First Lady's Family Festival event series; quarterly interdepartmental maternal and infant health meetings; and a comprehensive, statewide strategic plan to reduce maternal mortality by 50 percent over five years and eliminate racial disparities in birth outcomes.

Learn more about Nurture NJ at nj.gov/NurtureNJ (<https://nj.gov/governor/admin/fl/nurturenj.shtml>).

Follow First Lady Tammy Murphy on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/firstladynj?lang=en>) (@FirstLadyNJ), Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/FirstLadyNJ/>) (@FirstLadyNJ), and Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/firstladynewjersey/>) (@FirstLadyNewJersey).

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