

Bridges to Moms (BTM) provides essential care to pregnant homeless women in Boston who face enormous barriers to medical care that can impact both their own health and that of their babies. Established in 2016 under the direction of **Roseanna H. Means, MD**, BTM is almost entirely funded by philanthropy, using gifts from generous donors to assist women in maintaining healthier pregnancies, strengthening maternal bonding, and gaining household stability. Since BTM's inception, more than 500 women "graduated" from our program, putting their families on a healthier trajectory. Thank you for your interest in helping us ensure these members of our community can receive the best care regardless of their economic situation.



Roseanna H. Means, MD

Founder & Director, Bridges to Moms

Physician, Women's Health, Internal Medicine

Giving Families a Healthy Start



BTM meets women where they are, connecting with each woman on an individual basis to understand her personal circumstances and needs. Establishing trust is a key first step—many of our patients are escaping domestic violence or struggling with trauma and other mental health issues. When a patient trusts her doctor, she is more likely to accept help and stick to a treatment plan. Our personal service has yielded positive results, with many women reporting that they feel worthy and seen for the first time, and that they feel empowered to take control of their lives and improve their situations.



One major difference with BTM patients is the high utilization of preventative care. A large percentage of our patients are able to keep their primary care and pre- and post-natal appointments, which help them avoid the emergency room and lead to better, more sustainable health outcomes. As a result, most of our patients are able to deliver at term. Of those who need to spend time in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), BTM babies have shorter NICU stays despite higher numbers of complications, an indication of successful preventative care.



Most of our patients are women of color, a group for whom the risk of maternal mortality is five times higher than for white women; however, BTM has had no maternal deaths since the program's inception. Many of our patients also experience improvement in their housing situation after a year, which speaks to our team's resourcefulness and advocacy in addressing patient gaps in housing, transportation, food, shelter, and personal safety.

94%

of BTM patients enroll in primary care

94%

attendance at pre- and postnatal appointments

93%

of BTM patients are women of color

92%

of BTM patients carry to full-term

0

maternal deaths



"The personal attention we provide and the services we offer are changing the health trajectory of these families. We see sicker babies but can discharge them at the same rate as typical births. In fact, the work we do results in cost savings for both our hospital and taxpayers by keeping them out of crisis care. Supporting these at-risk women is not only the right thing to do, but also beneficial for our healthcare system."

—Roseanna H. Means, MD

500+

patients supported since 2016

90%

of patients connected to
mental health care

93%

of patients choose stable
birth control after delivery

81%

have improvement in quality
of housing after one year

Set Up for Success

BTM places a strong emphasis on helping mothers regain their socioeconomic footing to set them up for a successful, sustainable future. Through ongoing partnerships and an annual Career Day, BTM helps participants write their resumes and connects them with job training programs, as well as English as a Second Language and GED classes. The program also hosts an annual Day of Beauty just before Mother's Day to pamper new moms and foster community among participants.

Looking Ahead

Dr. Means is building collaborations with the departments of medicine, women's health, mental health, newborn medicine, and obstetrics/gynecology at the Brigham. Having a larger coalition within the hospital will broaden the impact of our outreach to a vulnerable patient population.

Dr. Means is also looking to bring more trainees and residents on site visits. The opportunity to see firsthand patients in their everyday environments is invaluable for understanding how social determinants have a real and tangible impact on health.

Opportunity for Impact

It is our mission to help all women get the dignified, compassionate support they need to give their babies the best chance at a healthy start in life. A gift to the Bridges to Moms Fund would provide our team with the necessary resources to continue this transformative work and we welcome the interest of philanthropists who share our vision.

