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Interview transcript participant #08

Auriluz Pacheco

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**NEW YORK CITY MATERNAL HEALTH ORAL HISTORY
PROJECT**

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INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT PARTICIPANT #08

Interviewer: Auriluz Pacheco

Date of Interview: May 11th, 2020

Location of Interview: New York, NY

NYC MHOP Interview Transcript #08

Transcribed by Auriluz Pacheco

Auriluz: It is May 14th, 2021, and today I am conducting an interview via Zoom, doing an oral history for the New York City Maternal Health Oral History Project, which aims to document the experiences of women who underwent or are currently undergoing pregnancy during the Covid-19 pandemic. Before we begin, I'll just be asking a few demographic questions, is that alright?

Participant 8: Yes.

Auriluz: Your age?

Participant 8: Yes, I'm 28.

Auriluz: Your salary?

Participant 8: \$75,000 a year.

Auriluz: Race?

Participant 8: African American.

Auriluz: And your highest level of education completed, education completed?

Participant 8: Master's degree.

Auriluz: Okay. Okay. So are you currently pregnant? Or did you already give birth?

Participant 8: I gave birth September 2020.

Auriluz: Congratulations!

Participant 8: Thank you.

Auriluz: When did you first find out that you were pregnant? Was it before or during the shutdown? And how many months were you?

Participant 8: Was it the shut down? I officially found out in May. So how many months? Is that March? I got pregnant in March, March 24. So April, May, is two months. But I was taking tests since April.

Auriluz: Okay. So it was like peak?

Participant 8: Yeah.

Auriluz: And how was that for you? Like, would you be able to tell me about your experience and what it was like from like, the moment you found out you were pregnant, to when you gave birth?

Participant 8: Yeah. So my periods are usually regular, because I take birth control. So I took a test. And on the test, like the line was very faint. So I actually threw it in the garbage picked it back up, because I'm like, I think I saw something. And like, when I like if I turn it on a certain angle, there was a line. So I was like, I was googling things that I was unsure. And then I took it again, like I try to take it again in the morning, because they said the morning it's about a time. Same thing happened. So I was like, I think initially it was hard to find care, because every everywhere was shut down. So they were doing everything virtually. So I was calling trying to find a clinic trying to find a doctor that I was like, let me reach out to Planned Parenthood. Um, and then they scheduled me for a virtual appointment. And then I told them about the test. She said, oh, you're probably your most likely pregnant and I'm like, but is there like another test that you guys do to like, make sure like a blood test or something so that we do the same thing. So we're just gonna advise you to get a pregnancy test and take it again. And they told me to take it like later on closer to me. But I think finding care in the beginning was really high, like I was on, I go to Monster south on the website, looking at doctors and as I'm calling a lot of the doctors don't work in that practice anymore. Like they either just do research or they work somewhere else. So that part was really hard. And then I just decided to call and say make an appointment with whoever you're like getting a doctor so that that part was really hard, but ended up working out I got a really good doctor. I didn't get my first ultrasound until June. So I wasn't ready. I think I was happy with that like eight weeks. It was like pretty like when I went there was like this was the first episode of like, Yeah, I don't know if I don't I was having twins at that.

Auriluz: Awww! Congrats.

Participant 8: Hahaha, thank you.

Participant 8: After that, I was kind of I was categorized as high risk. So they checked in every month. And then after a certain point it was every, it's supposed to be every two weeks; I actually ended up giving birth prematurely. So at 24 weeks, I gave birth to them. At 22 weeks, I went to follow up for my ultrasound. And that's when I was admitted into the hospital for is called insufficient cervix. So basically, my cervix was opening before it shut up. And actually the appointment that I went to two weeks prior to that appointment, I guess they saw something but didn't say anything to me. So at that point, the technician brings the doctor and I knew something was wrong. And I could ask them, like, why don't you tell me before and she was like, Well, it wasn't really like, like you were, I was borderline at that point. So she didn't feel she didn't feel the need to say anything. And then for some reason, it happened quickly, I decided to open quick. So then the doctor, he explained to us, oh, you can just get a stitch, and you'll be you'll be out in a day. And when I went to the ER, they were like no, like, it's, it was too risky, because they, they were going to be at risk of breaking the sack. And they want to do it. They

just advised me to stay there so they can monitor me, give me on progesterone, and just hope that they don't come too soon. So it was very, that part was very challenging. And in the midst of COVID because all the regulations, you have to do a COVID test. Nobody can really compare it to you; I think it was just one or two people I could put on a list to consume. And even that that communication wasn't even clear. Because no one took no one told me that. So I had like one of my friends who was in the city. She's supposed to be for the weekend. But she stayed a bit longer for me. But she was visiting me and my best friend came, my mom came my boyfriend came. So after a while, that's when one of the nurses was like, you're only supposed to have two people and I was sick. No one told me that so. But also, like they have to get COVID tested, and they had to wait. So the first night like, I don't think I think my boyfriend somehow got upset, but he wasn't supposed to get up there. He had to wait for the results for their test before they could come up, then he had to get retested every week. So that whole process was like very annoying. Um, my mom to be there for delivery. But the only person like I'll be there is either the there was only one person that could be there. So for some woman, they don't have their spouses or their partner. So like the mom would be able to, but you only could bring one person. And then they also the visiting hours were from like two to six. So it was very small window after you give birth, and the father could be there 24 hours, but before that it was just to see the sex. And yeah, so then the babies were actually in the queue for like three to four months. So one was an epic three months, the other four months. And that process was very similar like, because we had two kids, we were able to both be there but most parents could only have one parent there. Most parents have trouble alone and how to switch out with the father. So that was like another issue. And just like worrying about whether or not you caught Covid. If you get COVID, you can't see your baby until you know the two week quarantine and that's how you test negative. And also like just that risk of passing at sea or maybe or even any other baby when you may be already vulnerable. So yeah, that was my experience.

Auriluz: Would you be able to elaborate a little more on what the birthing process was like, for example, or when you went into labor?

Participant 8: Yeah, so for me, because they were preemie I actually. Well, this is my first two children. So like, I didn't really know what that contractions were I didn't know. I didn't know anything. So like the bosses kept asking me like, are you feeling in contractions? And I'm like, No, but I'm feeling cramps, I guess. So I didn't know, like is this a contraction? Someone explained it or tried. I don't think I was having contractions but just like there's a lot of things that I didn't know about. Like my whole situation I felt like I had little control. I didn't know about insufficient cervix until it happened. And I went to go Google things. My friends who some of them are nurses, and they have friends who are doctors so I was I was asking around, but it was a lot of unknowns. It was scary because the weekend before I gave birth, like I think that there is a I my cervix opened up a little bit more so they took me to the delivery side, just to monitor me and try to stop it. So I was on magnesium. I couldn't eat the whole and then the dilation kind of slowed down. I was having contractions, but I didn't know. Monitor told them so they were monitoring that. And instead I slowed down. So they sent me back to the other side. And then the next day, I was spotting. And we checked again and open more. So then they sent me back

to the delivery site. And I stayed there for like, like a whole day and a half before I gave birth. I was like, I was starving. I was drowsy from the medication. I also like I really wasn't feeling I started to feel more cramping, which I think those were kind of weird contractions because it really felt like something tight pulling in my own stomach. But it still wasn't intense. So I didn't know like that the babies were about to come out. And they were monitoring. So the doctor and the chef, you sent me that, you know, things like a pretty much quieted down and that he wasn't going to he didn't think that I would give her that man that would make switch to the light doctor. She came in and she was asking me a million questions. So I started to kind of get worried because I'm like, why she wasn't panicky, she was really calm, but like, why she asked me so many questions. She's like do you want a C section? And I was like, no; I don't want any c section. She was like, Okay, one of the babies are breeching. So if you don't want to do a C-section. What do you want to do and I was like, I don't know, like to have to decide now. Like I again, I didn't, I didn't know how everything works. So she was telling me like, if I wanted it, I had to do it before I give birth because of the way the procedure, it's the way it is done. So I was just like, okay, and I really I didn't I didn't know if I wanted or not. I got I didn't have time to figure out like the whole birthing plan because I thought I had a few more months. And I was gonna get a doula. But she explained that the reason why she suggested the epidural is because I didn't want a C section. And because one of the babies was breeching, she would have to stick her head out there. And usually people panic, or like, it's not a comfortable feeling, and she doesn't want me to panic and then the baby's heart rate drops. So then I agreed to get the actual birthing like when I was giving birth, they wasn't as bad as I expected. And I think it's because they were really small. So I had a boy and a girl. The girl was born second. The boy was born first the boy was one pound, six ounces in the ground was one pound seven ounces. How would I don't think I don't think I was having contractions because they when they were telling me to push, they were like usually it's like usually when you have contractions like you get the urge to push but because I wasn't I had to just push anyway, so that was like coaching me through it. But yeah, I pretty they told me I did really well I didn't really I use the epidural for the girl because they did have to stick their hand up and pull her out. But after that, I think the care once I was there was pretty good. So one of my friends was like, trying to connect me to her cousin who's a doula because we didn't know when I was going to give birth. I was in the process of like, starting I think she was gonna come see me that Monday and I had the baby Sunday night. But the doctors really, and the nurses really coached me through it. And I felt like I did have, like, I had a doula with me the way that they were, they were really talking me through it, they would like push like, like, You're, you're on the toilet. And I was like, okay, like, it really helps. So it turned out to be a good experience, just the beginning was very late but I think during the time that I gave birth, it was like the restrictions around COVID was a little bit. People were as scared of COVID like in the beginning, if it was in the beginning of COVID times, like I probably would have been on my own they would have not wanting to touch me, but I think due to me being like further along, they were there was more, more support. In the beginning, no one, no one was trying to see me in person. It was like no, we can do this virtually. Like but I want to come in first. Yeah,

Auriluz: I can imagine. How were you feeling when you found out you were pregnant, like in the midst of everything that was going on? And how do you currently feel right now, a few months later when COVID has kind of eased up?

Participant 8: Yeah. And the beginning I was very worried. Oh, just me in general. My karma, I guess I'm a planner. So like, I did not expect getting pregnant anytime soon. And now, like with COVID going around people losing their jobs. Everything was unknown. I'm like, is this the right time as I google. The articles actually said that they said, this is a good time, despite like the unknowns, but something to think about was like, financially, are you able to? Do you think you'll be in a position to provide my job? Luckily, he was very, like, I didn't lose my job throughout the whole pandemic. They worked from home, they worked with us, and they figured it out. But they kept preparing us for that. If it came to us on to them cutting jobs, like what would happen, but they were very, very supportive and like flexible. So it was a second part of your question.

Auriluz: So given that it wasn't anticipated were there any concerns that you had? And then what concerns do you have now, if any, even though COVID has a progressive? Are you feeling better about everything going on?

Participant 8: Yes and no, I think I feel better now. So now, I'm still working virtually. But it's a mixture of virtually like being in an office two days a week. So far, we're gradually going back to the office, I think September really planned for us to be back. More often than not, it is hard being actually being at home versus being in office. Because having like to take care of two kids and work at the same time is a lot. Especially like, I'm in meetings all day, and my dad said help out. But like, every day you hear your baby cry, you're gonna respond to it. So it's, it's really hard not to help out when you're home. Being an office, I'm able to focus more. So I think I'm actually looking forward to going back to the office more, for more days of the week.

Auriluz: So if you were pregnant during the peak of everything, what were some things that you had heard about COVID? And pregnancy? And did you have conversations with your doctor about it?

Participant 8: Yeah, so in the beginning, I heard about just like the unknowns didn't know how it affected babies, how it affected pregnant woman, so I wasn't nervous about it. But I actually never came up with my doctor, like, I actually stay I stayed home most of the time. I think I went anywhere, especially during quarantine. So I went to the store and back that was it. So I don't think I was really concerned about it. Um, yeah, like, I think, I think once I found that I was having twins like that, that took over my mind. And I was just focused on that, like, they were actually more focused on that too. So like, they were talking about how high risk they would have to induce me by 36 weeks. So that was more of the focus, rather than COVID. I know like up for appointments and things like that it did. I couldn't like share those moments with the Father like going through the ultrasounds when one of the technicians let me record it was actually the time that I found out I was having 20 Let me record that

whole session. And then I tried it again and the technician was like No, I was like, Oh, I didn't know I couldn't record I thought he actually told me the record last but they didn't really talk about COVID much..

Auriluz: That's so interesting to me. Given everything was so amplified that they would talk about these things more but I guess by now it's an unestablished understanding of what's going on.

Participant 8: Yeah, so true. I think it might be because they didn't know they didn't have the answers or maybe they just didn't they try to avoid I don't know but yeah, like they denied it didn't come up so like I guess there are times when I went to my appointment I didn't think about COVID because they never mentioned it Yeah, I guess it was possible because you know there's already so many worries. When the vaccine came out, my doctor recommended that I take it. I told her I was breastfeeding and if the vaccine would change anything. She couldn't really answer. And she said that. That she pretty much couldn't give me an answer but based on the research she doesn't think it's a risk so like she actually didn't know the answer and it was more like a like a judgment call for her.

Auriluz: Yeah it's definitely evident that we're all learning. So as more information came out, for everyone, did your experience change attention wise and appointment wise? Especially once you found out you were having twins.

Participant 8: Yeah, so after the pregnancy, actually the doula, I was overwhelmed with just everything. So the doula reached out to me check on me. I spoke to her like once or twice, and then I like, one time she called me and I just couldn't answer. I was very like, I guess, I don't know what the word I'm looking for. I was just like, I wanted to be by myself, especially like, and everything I was experiencing was a lot, they were born really premie. Everything was unknown, like the doc was always talking about, like, good chances of survival. So it was like really low at that time. Um, they were doing, they were doing great. But then it was the risk of different things, because they were so early on in previous stage, and as they got older, they got better. But in the beginning, I was just like, I said, a lot of people out. I didn't want to talk to people; I didn't feel like recapping what was going on with the babies. Now, it's more a lot of appointments. And so like, my focus is, I try to, I work a lot, and I got a promotion at work. So like, I'm trying to balance work, and then their appointments. So like they have to see like all these specialists because they were paying me to like, follow up with the eye doctor, the cardiologist, their pediatrician, one of my kids, he gets he sees a speech therapist with feedings, then they have early intervention. So it is a lot of appointments. A lot of like, and I think the telehealth now it's just easier for people to schedule things. So I see a lot of like, people calling me they want to do zoom sessions, they want to do this, they want to do that. Now people are gravitating more towards in person. So like, they have early intervention I was supposed to be we have telehealth, but I'm actually getting it in person. I think in the beginning, it was like, more focused on telehealth, and now it's going back to graduate in person, like people are more comfortable making visits and go into visits and having people come into their office. Congrats on your promotion. Thank you.

Auriluz: What do you wish you to receive throughout your pregnancy while you were giving birth or even now? And like what do you wish was different?

Participant 8: I definitely wish I knew more about just issues that women go through during pregnancy. And like not only my issue, but like the only thing that they really spoke about was playing preeclampsia, because I think that was more common. But I didn't know anything about insufficient cervix until I went through it. I didn't know about like, I know there's other things I want to go through because I actually joined like these Facebook groups for moms who had preemie premature babies. And everybody tells experiences like why they had their kids preemie. There's so many different things out there. And I think if women knew about it, like a doctor said something like, it's nothing I could have done differently to prevent it. It's just something that happens to someone and nobody knows why. But I still think like maybe, because I know myself like I, I like to I don't like to ask for help. I like to do things on my own. So like going to the supermarket, I'll go by myself and carry those bags, even though I shouldn't be carrying those bags or like, have my gender reveal, like two days if I was in the hospital, and I was dancing, like I'm like maybe if I knew I was more nervous, I was sat down the whole day. And they were saying that that didn't cause it. But just knowing more about the conditions could help me take more preventative measures, or I would have like, like, I know I was at the store a week before in closed offices, and I felt some pain and my pelvic. But I thought it was just really standing out from a lot for a long time and like the weight of the babies, I would have just went to the doctor then. I think I'm just not just if I knew something was wrong, then I would have just taken more precaution.

Auriluz: Does your provider currently provide like any additional resources given your circumstance during the day? At the moment?

Participant 8: No, It wasn't until after I was in the hospital. I saw like the doctors were talking to me about my condition. And if I had the babies every week, they came to me like so. You know, you're 23 weeks pregnant. Now if you have two babies now these are the chances of survival. This is like what could happen. But prior to that, like no one shared any call with me about any anything besides preeclampsia that was it.

Auriluz: Okay, so nothing around like additional courses you could take?

Participant 8: I think that that was like, that was coming later because my doctor did say that we were going to work on the birth plan. Like she gave me like a pamphlet with a timeline of things. So I think it was coming up but because I had them so early. Um, I didn't get all that until I was already put like I got it in the hospital. So after I gave birth, the nurse came in they helped me with lactation. They told me about like, um you know, pumping everything but prior to that, I didn't have that.

Auriluz: How was your financial situation if you feel comfortable speaking about that during the pregnancy and afterwards, like in terms of healthcare, Medicaid, Especially since you had twins, is it different?

Participant 8: Yeah, so I always pick the basic plans. I don't have a lot of medical conditions. So I go to the hospital, the doctor for checkups. So I usually pick the basic plans. So like, if I knew I was going to be pregnant, I would switch plans prior to because the bills that I have, it's ridiculous, like, every ultrasound had to have a deductible of \$800. So I had to leave that every ultrasound, I get like a bill of like 100, or 200, or \$400. So like, honestly, I don't even know how much I was paying, I just did a payment plan. And I was paying 130 a month, and I think I'm almost done. But when you I didn't realize like, insurance are very confusing to me. But like, when you have private insurance, you end up paying more, versus like someone who has Medicaid and my kids actually qualify for Medicaid, due to their parent being born premature. And I signed them up for my insurance. But in the beginning, they put my Medicaid as a primary insurance and like they were getting everything for free. I'm like wildly. It's crazy how, like you work and you like I'm working and I'm like, I think I have good coverage. And then yet I'm gonna hit with all these bills. Like, I don't understand what the coverage is for, like covering everything. But yeah, it's definitely expensive. If you don't have private insurance, definitely like getting like a FSC, I signed up for FSA account with my job. So like, I can use that to pay off my some of my bills, or just find like saving up money for your pregnancy.

Auriluz: So you mentioned earlier that you were looking at, like getting a doula and stuff. So how knowledgeable would you say that you are around your option regarding childbirth and like the classes in terms of resources that you should be getting?

Participant 8: In the beginning, I wasn't really knowledgeable. I mean, I'm a Google feen; I like to go to everything. So I was, I definitely was googling it, then my friends. So like reaching out to my friends, they had resources, like one of my friends, or family members will do lists. She has other friends who are doing this. So it was more so reaching out, I also googled and found some people online and like you could look to profiles and like read up about them. I wasn't really knowledgeable. I think now I know more, I'm still not as knowledgeable, but I know how to access the things I need. And I know more of what they do in terms of doulas and midwives. So I didn't really know like, I had to do this, but I didn't know what they were. And so I actually spoke to one who I was gonna start with, she told me like what she does is make you feel comfortable. You know, and it's based off of you. So like, she asked me if I was spiritual. And I told her I am. I'm like, I'm Christian, I believe in religion. And so like I wanted to incorporate back and it was, so just finding someone that fit your needs and also expressing your needs so that they can accommodate them.

Auriluz: So I know that things came a little quicker than you anticipated. And the babies came early and stuff and the doctors were probably trying to help you get a plan and stuff. But in an ideal situation, did

you have like some sort of idea of what type of birth you were intending on having whether like at home in the hospital? Birthing center?

Participant 8: Yeah, so like I was looking at the options, I think, especially after I knew I had twins. Like after that when you have a high risk pregnancy. It's like even the doula and everything would tell you hospital practice is the best. In my mind, I have plans to like I didn't want to have it in hospital. I did not want a C section. Like I never had surgery in my life. So I'm like I don't I don't I want to avoid a C section at all costs. So like that's the one thing I knew in my head like no, no c section. But like in terms of like, actual plan about the process. I didn't have that.

Auriluz: What are some things that you learned during your pregnancy and what are some things you wish you knew going into?

Participant 8: Um, some things that I learned definitely, like I said before, I learned about like, just the different things that women go through with pregnancy. Um, I think I wish I knew more about like, think just more about pregnancy in general, like I was doing my pregnancy, I was very nauseous. And like, I actually ended up telling the doctor about it because I'm like, is this normal? Like, it was it was really bad like I couldn't eat and like, I'm supposed to eat, you're pregnant and you have a baby inside you. It was really bad. So just knowing more about what women like, what I would what I would experience being pregnant, or what I may experience. I downloaded a lot of apps and they would tell me like this week, this might be happening in your body or, you know, your baby is this many weeks. Gestational diabetes. I wish I knew more about that was that was like maybe classes or like, that's provided more information about that.

Auriluz: So with that, where have you been getting your information from around like, the maternal experience, and make before the shutdown aspect now, like have like a little more experience with a lot more experience with professional dimension? You were like Google, like, can you tell me about that?

Participant 8: Yeah. So like, I looked up, I downloaded. What was the name of the app? I can't remember the means. But I know it my doctor, actually, when I was actually had a conversation about it, she told me, because I told her, I was looking at things on Google as she would like, yeah. One of the website she gave me I was lucky enough actually to go to it was parents something. I think was parent's center. I can't remember the full name. But I was, I was like looking on that website and then I would compare it on the different apps. So for my gender reveal, I had an app called baby lists for gifts, but it also, when you put in a due date, it tells you how many weeks pregnant you are. And it tells you like the baby is the size of this. And you might be experiencing this, you might feel a kick, that's something so like, I was like, I don't feel my baby kicking like, Am I supposed to feel them kicking me? I was really worried because I know, like some a lot of stillbirths happen. And I'm like, Am I supposed to feel the kicks because I don't feel it. So like, just like them talking, talking me through those things would have helped a lot.

Auriluz: As opposed to getting an application and stuff.

Participant 8: Yeah, because even like the app was, so you might feel a kick now. And like, I'm like, I don't feel anything. So I've actually mentioned that to the doctor. And she's like, no, like, it's fine. Some you probably don't notice that yet. But you will it'll get stronger around. And then that's what she told me that week, like when I would feel it more, and I did start to feel it more.

Auriluz: How often were you in contact with the doctors and stuff like asking those questions or make scheduling appointments? And what did it change? From the beginning? You mentioned that you had a lot of more meetings, or appointments because of the babies.

Participant 8: Yeah, in the beginning, it was actually in the beginning. It wasn't it wasn't as frequent. But it was a lot of telehealth. So I saw like a generic doctor. I saw my doctor, it also wasn't the same doctor like they were they were rotating their schedules. So I saw my doctor in the beginning. And then she will say that and she was working in the hospital. So then I saw another doctor. So I did. I got a lot of virtual care in the beginning. And then as I got more pregnant, they wanted to see me in person too, because of my high risk status. But the ultrasounds started. It was moving towards to like every two weeks. So prior to that I was I think every four weeks. And then like my appointments with my doctors was at certain stages. So like I believe, like at 16 weeks, they wanted to see me. So it was it was just like certain stages that they would tell you that they're gonna follow up with me. But I have on my chart and they're very responsive on there. So like I would if I had a question, I would just write to them on my chart, and I will schedule me for appointments.

Auriluz: Okay, that's good. So what were some things that you thought would happen with it, it was something that did happen, they didn't expect. And this can be related to anything like women have mentioned. Like what breastfeeding was like for them. They've mentioned what their relationships with their kids have been like afterwards; it can be in regards to anything.

Participant 8: Oh, yeah. I was always hearing about how people were like, as soon as you give birth, like you fall in love that didn't have not that I didn't like, I just like I was waiting for like some magical moment like, Oh my god, like the loves of my life. I didn't like I was I don't have them. I don't even know what I felt. I was just like, okay, they're here. I guess I was more worried than anything. But we didn't bond until when they were in the queue. Like I was very like, amazed at the different things they were doing. So like, whenever like my son looks at me, I'm like, oh, wow. Like he's actually like, I don't know if he could see me, but he's looking at me. And then like, my daughter was very feisty. So like to see her like that. And when she came home, oh my god, she cried a lot. And I was like, who said this was fun? This is when now that they're older, I'm like, Okay, now I see people saying like, yes, like, I'm in love. And now like everything that they do, I'm amazed by it. But at the beginning, obviously, no, people can say, oh, enjoy it. And I'm like, you come help me and see if this is enjoyable.

Auriluz: Haha, that's so interesting! I haven't heard about this so far.

Participant 8: Haha, yeah it was an unexpected part.

Auriluz: So would you say that you feel safe in medical settings?

Participant 8: Um, it's funny, because one of my friends when I was when I told her I was pregnant, her thing was, you should go up, like, further up north. Sorry, one second. Sorry, one of the babies work up.

Auriluz: It's okay, take your time.

Participant 8: Her thing was up north for medical care, because we get better care. And like everything that was going on in the news, like there were a lot of women just dying with no, like, no, no known cause. So she was worried but like, I was really researching the doctor. So even when they picked the doctor for me, I went and looked up, and I saw her reviews, and I felt comfortable because it said that she was really good. I, the only moment that I was scared was when I was giving birth, like, because of everything that's going on. And then me being high risk. And they said that's just in case they had to do a C section. That was very scary, because all I could think and was like, oh my god, I hope I don't die. But the doctors were really, like I said, really, really well. So I felt comfortable with the care and even like, in the Nicky with my kids. I know some people didn't have good experiences and in the queue, because like on the Facebook group, they were expressing that the nurses and doctors were really good with my kids. So like I personally feel comfortable. I think it's like the doctors that I had. I do understand like other women and what they go through and that medical care is not consistent in the country, but in New York City as well.

Auriluz: Is there anything that you would tell your hospital if you had the opportunity to do so? Or like health care providers?

Participant 8: Um, I think healthcare providers in general; I would say just to be more cognizant of like the patients, especially people of color. I want to say give them special attention. Because stories that I hear, the doctors don't know much about, like, the things that African Americans experience medically. So I guess like recessional things, and especially if you have you're working in those areas, or you have those kinds of clients like researching what they experienced, I think like, my dad is there in the Bronx, and they know a lot about pre eclampsia because it's more common in people of color. And that's why they kept like screening me for, for an eye telling me about it. So I think just be more well versed in those issues. Especially for those women.

Auriluz: That's really important. Is there anything that you feel like you want to share about your story around your experience for other mothers that may see this and just like anything that you might want to add?

Participant 8: From me as it's, I guess, I just want to say like, mothers in the future, whatever your story is, definitely share it with other woman because, as I said in the beginning, there's a lot about pregnancy and birth that I did not know about and I wish I knew, and that's like one of my goals, to share my story so that other women can know. You know what, what happens out there so like, so they can look out for the if they're going through it and have a better understanding of it.

Auriluz: Thank you so much for this and your story.