

Sister to Sister: Empowering Black women as health care consumers



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When it comes to getting the care that supports what matters most, there is a lot to talk about. [Community Conversations: Sister to Sister](#) in Cambridge, MA provides a forum for Black women to learn from experts -- also Black women -- on everything from allergies to elder care. Their faculty group of almost 250 Black women working in medicine, science and public health provide expertise and knowledge through monthly forums to support and empower participants. Over 1,000 women representing the full lifespan, from young adults to seniors, have participated so far.

Founded in 2009 at [Simply Erinn's Unisex Salon](#) in Cambridge, MA, the program provides social and educational resources to Black women to help harness their own power as health care consumers. Community Conversations helps participants explore health issues relevant to Black women and their families, address barriers they have faced, and help support and encourage one another in setting their own health agendas and goals. And, they've been able to continue these forums virtually throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The forums have explored many topics from eating well to skin disease, from immigrant family dynamics to maternal health, and from financial literacy to family conversations on mental health. Creating the space for Black women to learn, share, and support each other -- like knowing what questions to ask your doctor to make sure you are getting the care you want -- is especially important because Black women have historically been underserved in the U.S. healthcare system and continue to face significant disparities in health care. Program evaluations have consistently shown that participants feel empowered to improve their personal and family's health, as well as reporting an improved sense of health literacy. "Through my connections to Community Conversations," said Dorla White-Simpson, a member of Community Conversations' Steering Committee, "I have found another source of strength by finding my courageous voice."



If you identify as a Black woman, or have individuals in your network who might be interested in being faculty or an attendee, you can [learn more about Community Conversations: Sister to Sister](#) on their website.

[Learn more about Community Conversations](#)