

HealthConnect One's Doula Data System: A Community-based Approach to Program Evaluation

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BACKGROUND

Community-Based Doula Role

- Doula¹:**
- An experienced woman who provides guidance and assistance to a new mother in caring for her infant (Historical Greece)
 - A woman who provides support to mothers throughout labor (Contemporary)

Community-Based Doula (CBD)^{2, 3}:

- A woman who is a trusted member of the community she serves
- Employed to establish supportive relationships with mothers and their families
- Provides support early in pregnancy, during labor & birth
- Supports new families in caring for their infant

HealthConnect One (HC One)

- Began as the Chicago Breastfeeding Task Force in 1986
- Offers training and support to develop model programs for community-based maternal and child health promotion, including the CBD program model
- 44 existing CBD sites in 16 states
- CBD sites are in development or existence throughout 82 communities in 28 states
- Designated the National Community-based Doula Leadership Institute by the United States Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) since 2008

METHODS

The Chicago Doula Project: Pilot of the Intervention²

- Partnered to conduct a four-year CBD pilot in Chicago with a cohort of low-income teen mothers
- 3 sites in Chicago, 252 participants
- Identified preliminary evidence in favor of CBDs:
 - Increased breastfeeding (>80% initiation)
 - Lower rate of Cesarean sections with CBD presence
- Identified need for system to:
 - Integrate evaluation in program implementation
 - Build evidence base

CBD Evaluation System Development

- To address the need for continued evaluation and increase in evidence for CBD work, HC One set out to develop a data system
- 2009 HC One hired Harris-Braun Enterprises, LLC. to develop evaluation tool
- HC One internal and external stakeholders collaborated to determine needs of data system
- Identified 419 variables to collect and track services provided prenatally, during birth and into postpartum
- Doula Data* launched in August 2009

RESULTS

Doula Data

- Web-based monitoring and evaluation tool
- Topic based
- 419 variables
- 9 CBD sites currently implementing, 12 total including past CBD sites

- Three main types of user accounts
 - Doula
 - Supervisor
 - Site Director

Key Functions for Doulas

- Enter data on:
 - Client history
 - Prenatal and postpartum contacts
 - Labor and birth
- Access data on:
 - Current service utilization
 - Previous client outcomes
 - Track continuing education opportunities

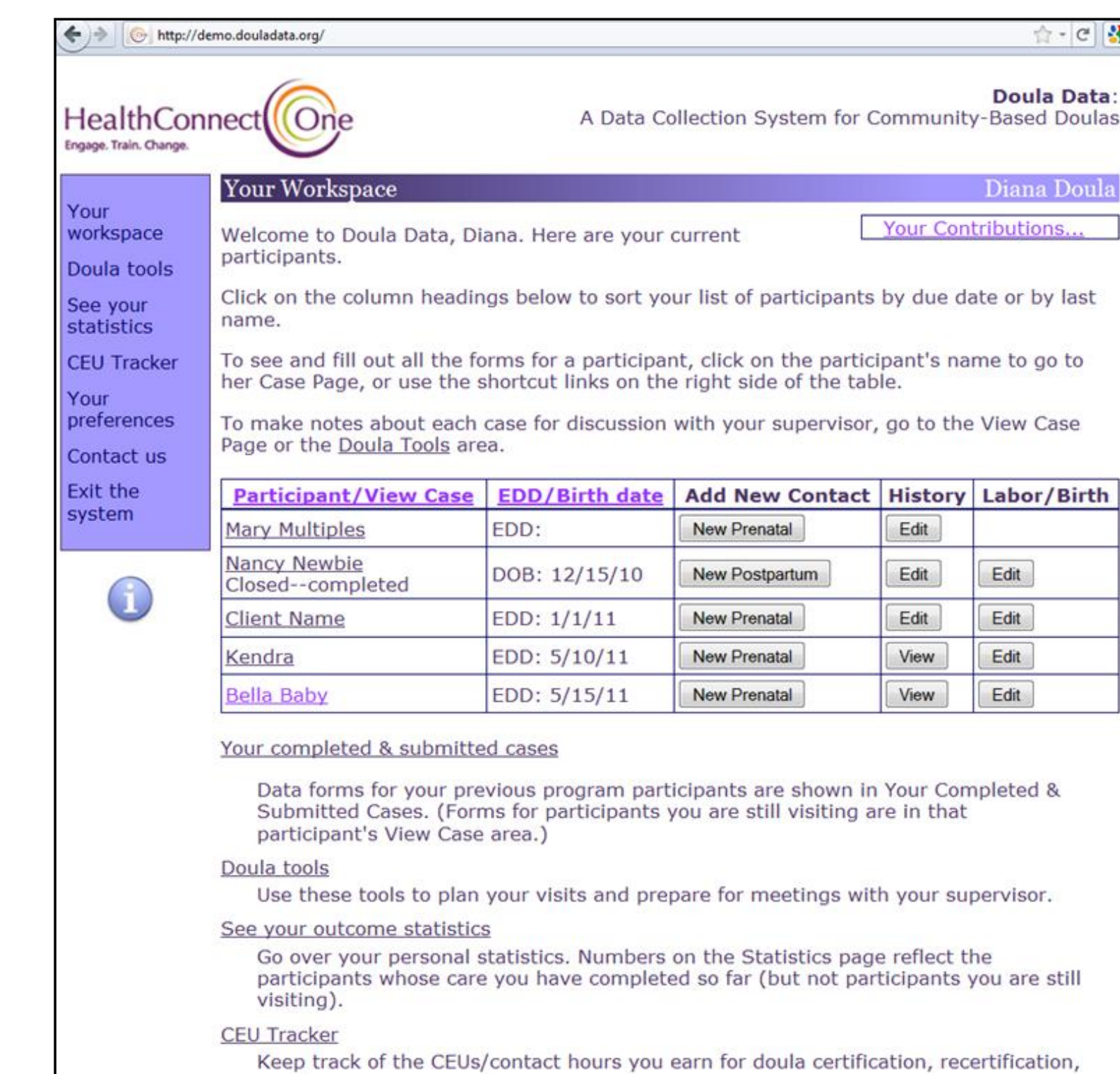


Key Functions for Site Directors

- Add a supervisor, doula or data enterer
- Assign or reassign a participant to a supervisor
- Access descriptive information about the doulas at your site
- Access custom statistics about your site
- Export de-identified data for your site

"Definitely recommend it to another employer... You're always there when we need you. I don't think we could be supported more."

~ CBD Supervisor, *Doula Data* User



Key Functions for Supervisors

- Add a doula or a participant
- Assign or reassign a participant to a doula
- Access descriptive information about doulas
- Track meetings with doulas
- Access custom statistics on your doulas' clients
- Review cases



CONCLUSIONS

Identified Benefits

- User-friendly
 - Integrates evaluation into CBD service provision to ensure easy data entry
- Safe and secure
 - Data backed up daily
 - Encrypted data using Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) technology
- Workforce development
 - Offers CBDs the opportunity to use innovative evaluation tools for professional growth
- Online – anywhere!
 - 3 sites use tablets (i.e., iPads) for immediate documentation and e-learning

Lessons Learned

- Topics vs. Answers
 - Data systems that record if certain topics are discussed, not the clients' answers, maintains trust and relationships
- Data system to guide service provision
 - Chronologically guiding CBD's work with a client in *Doula Data* ensures services are being provided and properly recorded
- Effective and efficient evaluation can work in community-based organizations
- Service providers as the data enterer increases quality of data
- Develop your own!
 - Data systems tailored to your work avoid duplicate data entry

Next Steps

- CBD sites not using *Doula Data* will slowly be trained and implement the system
- New CBD sites are automatically trained to implement *Doula Data*
- Continue training and support to CBD sites using *Doula Data*
- Use of the data set for rigorous research

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Active *Doula Data* users at:

Rock-Walworth Comprehensive Family Services, Inc	Healthy Family Initiatives
Brooklyn Young Mothers' Collective	BirthMatters
Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention	The Birth Circle
Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council	Migrant Health Promotion
Mothering Mothers	

***Doula Data* Technical Developers:** Harris-Braun Enterprises, LLC.

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- HealthConnect One; <http://www.healthconnectone.org/>.