Healthy Beginnings with Title V: Advancing Anti-Racism in Preterm Birth Prevention

Expression of Interest for Community-Based Organizations, Tribal Governments and Tribal Organizations
Deadline to Respond: June 4, 2021 by 11:59 pm EST

The Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP) is currently accepting applications for participation in the Healthy Beginnings Learning and Practice Cohort. See below for:

1. RFA Summary
2. Program Background
3. Program Elements and Expectations
4. Interest Form
5. Statement of Participation
6. Planning Ahead

RFA SUMMARY

The Healthy Beginnings with Title V: Advancing Anti-Racism in Preterm Birth Prevention program will convene six teams comprised of state maternal and child health (MCH) agencies and community-based organizations, tribal governments, or tribal organizations in an 18-month learning and practice cohort. The cohort will identify and address racism in policy, data and funding structures at the state level that sustain inequities in perinatal health, including preterm birth, in Black, Hispanic/Latine/x, Indigenous, and other communities of color.

Community Leader Search—Are you interested?

✓ Community-based organization (CBO), Tribal government or Tribal organization serving Black, Hispanic/Latine/x, Indigenous, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other communities of color to advance birth equity.
✓ Capacity and desire to provide compensated* guidance to staff working at your state health department on how to equitably partner with and support organizations like yours. (*See Funding on pg. 4-5 for more details).
✓ Interest in learning and collaborating with state health agencies in your state and other states to deconstruct racist policies, data, and funding structures.
✓ Commitment to addressing disparities through a racial equity approach.
✓ Interest in influencing racial equity at state and community levels to transform policies and programs to improve birth outcomes.

Quick Details

Expression of Interest Released: Monday, April 26, 2021
Applications Due: Friday, June 4, 2021, by 11:59 pm ET
Selection Announcement: Tuesday, June 15, 2021
Project Period: July 2021 – December 2022
Number of Participants: Up to 6 state MCH/CBO teams
Point of Contact: Jessica Stieger (jstieger@amchp.org) and Shanel Tage (stage@amcho.org).

About AMCHP

The Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs (AMCHP) is a national resource, partner, and advocate for Title V state public health leaders and others working to improve the health of women, children, youth, and families, including those with special health care needs. We are a membership organization who leads by disseminating best practices; advocating on our member’s behalf in Washington; providing technical assistance; and convening leaders to share experiences and ideas.

We’re all in. AMCHP’s mission is to lead and support programs nationally to protect and promote the optimal health of women, children, youth, families, and communities. We cannot fully achieve this goal unless we acknowledge that racism is a public health crisis and directly impacts the health outcomes of our communities and those we serve. AMCHP is committed to working with you to dismantle racism and bring about real change. We, in AMCHP, are focused on health equity and must infuse this in all that we do. Although we’ve made progress, there is much more to be done.
MORE ABOUT TITLE V

Every year, the United States Congress sets aside funding for the 59 states and jurisdictions to promote and improve the health and well-being of our nation’s mothers, children, and their families. This funding is through the Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant, one of the largest federal block grant programs. The amount that states and territories receive is based on a formula, which considers the proportion of children living in poverty in a particular state compared to the total number of children living in poverty in the entire United States. States and jurisdictions are required to match every $4 of federal Title V money that they receive by at least $3 of state and/or local money (i.e., non-federal dollars). Many states overmatch, which results in more than $5 billion being available each year for maternal and child health programs at the state and local levels. In 2019, the Title V Block Grant provided health care and public health services that reached 92% of all pregnant women, 98% of infants, and 60% of children nationwide, including children with special health care needs.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Public health professionals working in state and territory health agencies that receive the sizeable and flexible Title V Block Grant funding have a unique role and power to drive resources toward public health and community health solutions that advance equitable perinatal health outcomes. State and territory Title V programs are seeking resources, guidance, and conversation for centering health equity and racial equity in efforts to improve maternal and infant health and halt the production of racial disparities in these outcomes. However, they cannot effectively do this without co-creation with the communities they serve and learning and practicing the principles of anti-racism.

Project Overview—The Big Picture

In July 2021, AMCHP will launch an 18-month capacity building project that will bring together teams from six states as a cohort to learn about and practice dismantling racism in state health department policies and practices. The goal of this project is to build transformational partnerships between Title V MCH agencies and Community-based Organizations (CBOs), Tribal governments and Tribal organizations. Through the development of these collaborative alliances, this project aims to dismantle policies and programs that perpetuate racism through inequities in funding and support the sustainment and spread of community innovations. The learning and practice cohort will be comprised of six state health agencies and birth equity community leaders from Black, Indigenous, Hispanic/Latine/x, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other people of color, including distinct cultural groups made marginalized by white supremacist culture. Together, they will affirm the state health agency’s commitment to an anti-racist agenda for preterm birth prevention that will focus on increasing access to culturally reflective and community-rooted services demonstrated to improve birth outcomes.

The Goal—Target Outcomes

- Identify levels of racism in everyday MCH practice.
- Foster sustainable and equitable relationships between state MCH programs and CBOs.
- Develop action plans for the following:
  - Identify racist policies and programs that perpetuate inequities in MCH funding, such as barriers to the allocation and the distribution of funding to community-based organizations.
  - Identify actions the MCH program can take to support the investment in and sustainability of community solutions significantly improving birth outcomes for Black, Indigenous, Hispanic/Latine/x, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other birthing people of color.

This project is made possible by funding from the Pritzker Children’s Initiative and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.
Communities Leading in Birth Justice—Why We Strive to Partner with You

Simply put, you are the experts. The Healthy Beginnings with Title V: Advancing Anti-Racism in Preterm Birth Prevention program centers and values the expertise of on-the-ground leadership and lived experiences of community members. Through this program, we, as the Learning and Practice cohort, will hold each other accountable and acknowledge our collective and individual roles in directly or unintentionally enabling and/or supporting systems of inequity. Thus, we are seeking guidance from Black, Indigenous, Hispanic/Latine/x, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other birth justice community leaders to challenge state-level MCH agencies’ policies and practices to push forward strategies in dismantling racist and inequitable systems. Last March, we convened a Strategic Action to Prevent Preterm Birth meeting. During that meeting, we identified key strategies that serve as the drivers of this project’s objectives. Here are the ways we aim to transform state level policies and practices to be anti-racist:

**PROGRAM ELEMENTS & EXPECTATIONS**

**Selection Priorities—Are You a Match?**

- ✓ Intentionally serve Black, Indigenous, Hispanic/Latine/x, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other birthing people of color, including distinct cultural groups made marginalized by white supremacist culture. [Yes ☐ No ☐]

- ✓ Organizational activities support birthing people during the perinatal period, and the organization is able to estimate the number of families/individuals who were reached with the assistance of funding support. * [Yes ☐ No ☐]

- ✓ Leadership, including Board of Directors, is racially and ethnically diverse, and/or is representative of the communities served. [Yes ☐ No ☐]

- ✓ Have the capacity to directly receive or otherwise assign a fiscal agent to execute a contract between the organization and AMCHP (for disbursement of funds). [Yes ☐ No ☐]

*As part of receiving funding for the project, the Pritzker Children’s Initiative is requesting that awarded organizations demonstrate impact by estimating the number of families or individuals served.

---

This project is made possible by funding from the Pritzker Children’s Initiative and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.
Commitment—What to Expect

1. **Virtual networking and discussion space**—The Learning and Practice cohort will use a virtual platform to share and discuss activities, pre-recorded learning content and other materials.

2. **Monthly virtual learning events**—We value your organization’s role in the community. To avoid straining your organization’s capacity to continue to provide essential services, the Learning and Practice cohort will prioritize scheduling events to accommodate your schedule. Learning events will take place for 60 minutes approximately every month.

3. **Facilitated action planning and goal setting sessions**—Collaboration with state/territorial team to identify key activities to support policy development and/or implementation.

4. **Time commitment**—Although activities may vary month to month, we estimate 5-6 hours of time commitment per month.

Participant Benefits—**The Perks**

- On demand coaching and support for capacity building needs.
- Access to reproductive justice and racial equity experts via Steering Committee advisors.
- Establish and foster a relationship with your state MCH agency.
- Peer-to-peer connections and networking opportunities.
- Sharing and dissemination of your organizational information and strategies through newsletters and AMCHP annual conference.
- Technical assistance from AMCHP, federal and national partners, and other subject matter experts.
- Opportunity to become an AMCHP organizational member and attend the AMCHP Annual Conferences, free of charge for the duration of the Learning and Practice cohort.
- AMCHP staff support for your organization’s submission of practices to Innovation Hub.

**Tentative Timeline**

The Healthy Beginnings Learning and Practice cohort will commence on July 1, 2021 and end December 31, 2022 (18 months).

EOI Release: 4/26/2021
Q&A Call: 5/12/2021 @ 2PM EST
EOI Submissions Due: 6/4/2021
Teams Announced: 6/15/2021

**Funding—Financial Compensation for Expert Contributions**

We do not wish to further perpetuate inequities in MCH funding or exploit the knowledge and wisdom of community leaders engaged in state teams for the benefit of state governmental entities. AMCHP has devised a flexible mechanism for providing funding support to CBOs, Tribal governments and Tribal organizations partnered in the Learning and Practice cohort. The method of disbursement of funds will be up to the selected organizations.

Selected organizations will have the option to receive support in the form of 1) funds/direct monetary assistance of up to $33,000; 2) nonmonetary assistance, such as expert consultative services or training, of up to $33,000 in value paid directly by AMCHP; or 3) a combination of both options (1 and 2), for a total value of up to $33,000.

We understand that the availability of funds can pose an administrative burden. Therefore, AMCHP will
remain flexible in the final make-up of the contracts with each organization. Decisions regarding disbursement preferences are not required at the time of submission. Following the finalized cohort selection, CBOs and Tribal governments or Tribal organizations will have an opportunity to determine how funding will be administered.

**Reporting Procedures**

**Frequency**—AMCHP will require participating CBOs/Tribal governments and Tribal organizations to submit an expenditure plan for the disbursement of the $33,000 funding. Expenditure plans will not be requested until four months after the start of the Learning and Practice cohort. Following the submission and acceptance of the initial expenditure plan, reports will be requested on a quarterly basis. At the conclusion of the learning and practice cohort 18-month period, organizations will be asked to submit a final budget report.

**Format**—AMCHP would like to minimize creating any unnecessary administrative burden. To accommodate your organization’s ability to easily submit initial, quarterly, and final reports, we would like to offer flexibility in the format in which to submit. Please see below for potential submission options.

1. Send budget directly to AMCHP staff:
   a. Format currently used by organization.
   b. AMCHP developed budget template.
2. Submit via SurveyMonkey questionnaire.

Please note: Final reporting format will be determined following the commencement of the Learning and Practice cohort.
Healthy Beginnings with Title V: Advancing Anti-Racism in Preterm Birth Prevention

INTEREST FORM

Please complete the following interest form and return to Shanel Tage (stage@amchp.org) and Jessica Stieger (jstieger@amchp.org) by Friday, June 4, 2021 by 11:59 pm ET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization Name/Tribal Government</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Contact</td>
<td>Secondary Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial/Ethnic Identity</td>
<td>Racial/Ethnic Identity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please record a brief video/audio OR submit a letter of interest that addresses the following questions. If you record a brief video, be sure to include the link to the video with the above contact information completed and signature on the statement of participation at the end of this form.

1. **Organization Description**—Describe your organization, including the work that you do, the community that you serve, and the demographics (racial/ethnic make-up, gender diversity, age ranges, etc.) of your leadership and staff. Please describe how you represent the interests of your community and how you foster trust, partnership, and engagement with your community. Please also share your organization’s proudest moment/organizational win!

2. **Title V Connection**—Describe your current relationship with your state health department, if any (a pre-existing relationship with the state health department is not required to participate). What do you hope to gain through a deeper relationship with your state health department? What do you hope to share with the state health department about your work and the people you serve?

3. **Organizational Support & Capacity**—At what stage would you describe your organization (start-up, growth, expansion, mature, stagnation)? What resources do you need to sustain and to enhance your organization’s ability to collaborate with a state health department? What potential challenges or barriers might you anticipate in joining this learning cohort? What new knowledge, skills, or resources do you hope to gain during this cohort?

4. **Participation Interest**—What excites you about participating in this cohort? What do you want to learn? Are there activities or strategies outlined that you are interested in focusing on as part of the cohort?

5. **Respecting Expertise**—Please share how AMCHP and the state MCH departments can best engage and respect your expertise and time during the Learning and Practice cohort. How can AMCHP and our project team best support you in providing guidance to state MCH Title V staff about building equitable partnerships with your organization?
STATEMENT OF PARTICIPATION

Please read the statement of participation and provide a signature below.

Commitment to Collaboration – Healthy Beginnings Learning and Practice Cohort
In the spirit of collaboration, AMCHP is committed to working with and supporting CBOs and Tribal organization or Tribal government teams. In this regard, AMCHP will provide the following to selected organizations:

✓ Creating an environment of respect, engagement, and co-creation between state health agencies and community-based organizations and tribal governments.
✓ Transparency and honesty.
✓ Virtual programming through a series of learning events.
✓ Facilitated virtual action planning and goal setting sessions with state/territorial Title V teams.
✓ Peer-to-peer connections and networking opportunities.
✓ Sharing and dissemination of your organization’s resources and materials.
✓ Robust technical assistance from AMCHP, steering committee, and subject matter experts.

Commitment to Collaboration – State/Territory Team & CBO Partnership
In the spirit of collaboration, our team is committed to working with AMCHP, the steering committee, and our state/territory Title V MCH team. In this regard, our community-based organization/tribal government agrees to:

✓ Identify 2 team members representing our organization to participate in cohort meetings and communication.
✓ Co-develop a state action plan with the MCH agency in our state.
✓ Attend all cohort virtual meetings to the best of our ability.
✓ Participate in project evaluation activities, such as evaluations of individual learning events.

Financial Responsibility—Contracting and Reporting Program Impact
If selected to join, our team agrees to meet the following requirements to accept the available funding (not to exceed a total of $33,000):

✓ If needed, assign a fiscal agent to execute a contract between our organization and AMCHP (for disbursement of funds).
✓ Submit an expenditure plan and quarterly and final budget reports between the 4-month and 18-month period.
✓ Measure impact: estimate the number of individuals or families served as a result of receiving $33,000 funding support. *

Name: __________________________________________
Signature: ______________________________________ Date: ______________

*As part of receiving funding for the project, the Pritzker Children’s Initiative is requesting that awarded organizations demonstrate impact by estimating the number of families or individuals served.
PLANNING AHEAD

Thank you for submitting your Interest Form! We are humbled and honored to have your interest, and hope that we can work with you in the Healthy Beginnings Learning and Practice cohort. If opportunities do not align this time, AMCHP is committed to finding other opportunities to work together and build relationships with your organization in the future. Please read the outline below to understand how we will select CBO/Tribal Government and Tribal Organization partnerships for this cohort.

Selection Priorities for CBO/Tribal Government and Tribal Organization Participation in Learning and Practice Cohort:

✓ Intentionally serve Black, Indigenous, Hispanic/Latine/x, Asian, Pacific Islander, and other birthing people of color, including distinct cultural groups made marginalized by white supremacist culture.
✓ Organizational activities support birthing people during the perinatal period and are able to estimate the number of families/individuals who were reached as a result of funding support.
✓ Leadership, including Board of Directors, is racially and ethnically diverse, and/or is representative of the communities they serve.
✓ Have the capacity to directly receive or otherwise assign a fiscal agent to execute a contract between their organization and AMCHP (for disbursement of funds).

In addition to this Expression of Interest, AMCHP is also requesting applications from state agencies interested in participating in the Healthy Beginnings Learning and Practice cohort. CBO/Tribal governments and Tribal organizations may be selected for this cohort if the MCH department in their state also submits application. Please read the outline below to understand how we select ideal CBO/Tribal government and Tribal organization partnerships for the Learning and Practice cohort.

Selection Priorities for State MCH Program Participation in Learning and Practice Cohort:

✓ Demonstrated, internal commitment to health equity.
✓ Ready and willing to reflect on state’s institutional history and contributions to structural inequities, including racism.
✓ Endorsement of their state health officials or other key approving entities for their application, and assurance from these decision-makers that they will be championed and supported in implementing the anti-racist strategies co-created with community-based organizations.
✓ Dedicated team to participate in Learning and Practice cohort.

Tentative Timeline

The Healthy Beginnings Learning and Practice cohort will commence on July 1, 2021 and end December 31, 2022 (18 months).

AMCHP will release the Healthy Beginnings Learning and Practice Cohort Expression of Interest on Monday, April 26, 2021. AMCHP will host a Q&A call Tuesday, May 12 at 2 PM EST http://bit.ly/QnAEoi. The deadline to submit the Expression of Interest form and letter (or audio/video response) is 11:59 pm ET on Friday, June 4, 2021. The six selected state MCH and CBO/Tribal government/Tribal organization teams will be announced by Tuesday, June 15, 2021.

This project is made possible by funding from the Pritzker Children’s Initiative and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.