Puerto Rico
Maternal and Child Health Block Grant 2020

The Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant, Title V of the Social Security Act, is the only federal program devoted to improving the health of all women, children and families. In FY2018, 91% of all pregnant women, 98.7% of infants, and 53.7% of children nationwide benefitted from a Title V-supported service. To learn more about Title V, visit www.amchp.org.

MCH Block Grant Funds to Puerto Rico

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2017</th>
<th>FY 2018</th>
<th>FY 2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$15,636,032</td>
<td>$15,800,897</td>
<td>$15,785,792</td>
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Title V Administrative Agency:
Puerto Rico Department of Health
Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Division
Children with Special Medical Needs Division

*States must provide a three dollar match for every four Federal dollars allocated.

Protecting and Improving the Health of Puerto Rico’s Families

Women/Maternal Health - MCAH centers attention to women in the pre-conceptive and inter-conceptive periods. The development of the Women in Reproductive Age Preventive Health and the Maternal Care Guidelines will enhance their health status. The implementation of the Law # 188 regarding the establishment of the Maternal Mortality Epidemiologic Surveillance System (MMESS) and the Review Committee, the PRDOH Administrative Order Num. 366, requiring all birthing hospitals to incorporate the Hard Stop Policy, and the level of care assessment using the CDC LOCATE tool are strategies to decrease infant and maternal mortality and to ensure adequate services for the population. The Home Visiting Program (HVP) is the cornerstone of the MCAH and, together with the perinatal nurses and the community health workers, has been instrumental in the prevention of the Zika virus transmission campaign island wide, the promotion of preventive visits and supporting services to families through individual education, screenings, referrals and follow-ups. After the impact of hurricanes Irma and Marla MCAH staff worked tirelessly to identify the needs of the MCH population and link them to resources available in the community from government and private entities.

Perinatal/Infant Health – Infant Mortality (IM) is a top priority for which MCAH will continue to focus its efforts on strategies to decrease premature, LBW and ZIKA virus infections. The PHSG, Hard Stop Policy, the multimedia campaign The Encounter of my Life, the CDC LOCATE initiative, the PR FIMR and the MMESS efforts are evidence-based strategies to increases infant survival. In a similar effort the Home Visiting Program delivers support, education and prevention for high risk pregnancies and their child until the age of two. The PR Breastfeeding Promotion Collaborative Group, the Baby Friendly Hospitals Initiative and the implementation of a National Plan for Obesity Prevention in PR, with emphasis on promoting the initiation and prolongation of breastfeeding, are also contributors to decreasing infant mortality.

Child Health – Improving the health and wellbeing of children includes decreasing morbidity by reducing unintentional injuries, and strengthening the socio-emotional development in the pediatric population. Promoting children’s preventive care and the use of the PR Pediatric Preventive Health Care Services Guidelines (PPHCSG) and EPSDT, and providing the Responsible Parenting Courses (0-5 and 6-11 years) increases the opportunities for effective interventions to optimize the following measures of well-child care: evaluation of development, nutritional habits, physical activities, immunization, injury prevention, reduction of forgotten baby syndrome, perform screenings and provide anticipatory guidance. Promoting screening for infants at high risk for caries and referral for a dental home at an early age is a strategy implemented to decrease the prevalence of early childhood caries.

Adolescent Health – Youth participation and youth/adult alliances are MCAH’s main assets towards youth’s health/wellbeing. Positive Youth Development leads all initiatives. Youth Health Promoters Project empowers youths in public schools to adopt healthy behaviors and reach their full potential while promoting health and wellbeing. The second Youth Advisory Council (PRYAC 2018-2020) includes 20 youths with diverse capabilities and orientations from across the island that give advice on initiatives and public policies regarding adolescent health, carries out public education, and represents DOH within and outside PR. MCAH partnered with a HRSA-Funded Health Center to develop PR’s Youth Friendly Healthcare Services to promote healthy lifestyles and annual adolescent well-visits. A mass media campaign on youth's
health/wellbeing and annual health visit was launched. Understanding Adolescence workshop is offered to youth and adults to effectively support young people through understanding and appreciating the developmental processes at work in their lives, including youth brain development. Due to the devastating effects of hurricanes Irma and María over Puerto Rico, a special intervention (Hope after the Hurricane) was developed to help youths understand and respond to these unexpected events and promote solidarity.

**Children with Special Health Care Needs** – The CSHCN Program seeks to improve access to health care services through systems’ development, service coordination, quality improvement, and family engagement. The Program implements activities towards the enhancement and expansion of the medical home model as well as successful transitions to adult health care of YSHCN, and provides a safety net to CSHCN population delivering enabling and pediatric specialty services. To reach the goal of early ASD diagnosis and intervention (before three years of age), strategies are being implemented to strengthen ASD early screening. Among strategies are: health professionals’ capacity development, community education and the creation of an ASD Register. The CSHCN Program also gives support to early screening programs/systems by linking families to services promptly. Among these programs are: the PR-Birth Defects Surveillance and Prevention System (BDSPS) which identifies newborns with birth defects, including screening for Critical Congenital Heart Disease (CCHD); PR- Newborn Screening Program (NSP) which assures all newborns are provided with a bloodspot screening and follow-up; and the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening (UNHS). The CSHCN Program continues to be the lead for services and care coordination for families affected by the Zika virus infection.

**Percentage Served by the Puerto Rico MCH Program***

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pregnant women</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infants under one</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children and adolescents</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children - special healthcare needs</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
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*2018 State/Jurisdiction Annual Reports Submitted to the Maternal and Child Health Bureau

**Priority Health Needs in Puerto Rico**

- Improve Women of Reproductive Age’s (WRA) health and wellbeing, including emergent conditions
- Improve birth outcomes
- Decrease infant mortality
- Improve children’s health and wellbeing
- Improve adolescent’s health and wellbeing
- Increase the number of CSHCN who receive regular ongoing comprehensive health care within a medical home
- Increase the number of CSHCN aged 12 to 17 years who receive adequate support and services for their transition to adult health care
- Decrease the age when children at risk for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) receive their first diagnostic evaluation
- Reduce the prevalence at birth of neural tube defects
- Implementation of health information technology to increase access to necessary health services, ensure consistent tracking and monitoring of CSHCN and improve CSHCN program data

**State Selected National Performance Measures**

- Well Woman Visit
- Risk-Appropriate Perinatal Care
- Breastfeeding
- Adolescent Well-Visit
- Medical Home
- Transition
- Preventive Dental Visit

For more information, contact:

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**Current Special Projects of Regional and National Significance (SPRANS)**

**State Systems Development Initiative (SSDI)**
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Sánturce, PR