Women’s Health Now and Beyond Pregnancy

Location: Wisconsin
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Category: Emerging Practice

BACKGROUND
The health of women before pregnancy or before a subsequent pregnancy has a great impact on birth outcomes. Reproductive health is a key component of women’s health. Family planning services are important to help women achieve their reproductive plan. The Women’s Health Now and Beyond Pregnancy Project integrates interconception care into existing public health services and normalizes family planning as a component of public health programming.

The Women’s Health Now and Beyond Pregnancy Project enhances Medicaid Prenatal Care Coordination services to include a focus on interconception care before future pregnancies.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES
The Women’s Health Now and Beyond Pregnancy Project aims to:

- Integrate women’s health and preconception services into existing public health services
- Promote ongoing folic acid consumption for women in the postpartum period
- Promote healthy spacing of pregnancies
- Put into practice the standard of care that assures pregnant women have access to family planning supplies/services prior to delivery
- Assure access to a medical home for reproductive health
- Support enrollment in the Family Planning Waiver or other Medicaid program (based on eligibility)

TARGET POPULATION SERVED
The Women’s Health Now and Beyond Pregnancy pilot project was implemented in five local public health departments in Wisconsin. Services expanded statewide in 2010 in community-based family planning clinics.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES
Five local public health departments participated in a pilot project in 2008-2009 to promote folic acid consumption and promote healthy spacing of pregnancies. Providers implemented the following interventions during the third trimester of pregnancy and the postpartum period: 1) provide condoms for dual protection against pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, 2) provide emergency contraception in advance of need, 3) assure access to a primary method of birth control prior to delivery, 4) assist with enrollment in the family planning waiver, and 5) provide multivitamins with folic acid. Pilot sites received group education, individual consultation, resource materials, and supplies. Data were collected using the Wisconsin MCH data system, SPHERE (Secure Public Health Electronic Record Environment). The pilot project changed provider practices and improved integration of family planning into prenatal/postpartum services.

The project expanded in 2010 when the Family Planning Program established standards of care to provide third trimester pregnancy planning, reproductive life plans, and contraception to ensure timely initiation of contraception following delivery.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES/EVALUATION DATA
Each participant in the project was entered in the MCH data system, SPHERE. The record includes demographic data, health care coverage, health needs, and information on activities and outcomes. Variables of interest for evaluation were provision of vitamins with folic acid, provision of contraception, and inter-pregnancy interval. The SPHERE reports could show the first two; WIC data in our electronic database, ROSIE, will be used to continue to follow up on future pregnancies in order to measure inter-pregnancy

TITLE V/MCH BLOCK GRANT MEASURES ADDRESSED

| #1: Percent of women with a past year preventive visit. |
intervals for women enrolled in the project towards the end of the enrollment period.

**PROGRAM COST**
The project received funds totaling $13,000 for a two year period (July 07 – June 09) from General Purpose Revenue for Birth Defects Prevention and Surveillance. The five pilot sites each received $2000 in stipends and Health Care Education and Training received $3000 for technical assistance and the purchase of multivitamins.

**ASSETS & CHALLENGES**

**Assets**
The Wisconsin Division of Public Health is committed to program integration and is using the CDC model of Healthy People at Every Stage of Life as a framework. Within the MCH program, the Women’s Health Now and Beyond Pregnancy project was implemented as a program integration effort of the perinatal, family planning/reproductive health and birth defects prevention programs.

**Challenges**
- Limited knowledge of contraceptive technology among health providers
- Community culture that limited inclusion of emergency contraception and other family planning services
- Lack of established relationships with family planning providers and lack of resources

**Overcoming Challenges**
Challenges were overcome by offering provider education about contraception and offering technical assistance to establish partnerships with family planning providers.

**LESSONS LEARNED**
Brief interventions focusing on preconception messages and services can easily be integrated into existing public health programs and strategies.

**FUTURE STEPS**
A pilot project in 2011 will support Family Planning sites to implement additional women’s health interventions such as depression screening, smoking cessation, or promotion of physical activity.

Managed care organizations and healthcare providers will implement a pilot project to integrate interconception services for women with a previous adverse pregnancy outcome.

**KEY WORDS**: Interconception Care, Women’s Health, Child Spacing, Family Planning, Reproductive Health, Preconception Care

**RESOURCES PROVIDED**
The Women’s Health Now and Beyond Pregnancy toolkit was developed and posted on the website of Health Care Education and Training (see Resource Center at [www.wifamilyplanning.org](http://www.wifamilyplanning.org)). The toolkit provides educational materials on the following topics: reproductive life plans, folic acid, emergency contraception, birth spacing, birth control after childbirth, birth control while breastfeeding, women’s health issues, and the Wisconsin Family Planning Waiver.

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