

Meeting summary for Women & Children's Health Committee Zoom Meeting (03/11/2024)

Quick recap

The meeting discussed various topics including the meeting agenda, a proposed pilot project with the Department of Social Services, the endorsement process, challenges of transitioning to virtual training due to Covid-19, and updates on projects from the Connecticut Coalition against domestic violence. Key points included the need to address developmental and social emotional concerns of children at risk, the proposal of an integrated care pilot, challenges of building relationships in a virtual setting, and the importance of education and support in addition to screening for individuals who are pregnant or postpartum.

Summary

Amy decided to give people a few more minutes to join before starting the meeting. Once the meeting started, Amy introduced Heidi and Susan from the Connecticut Association for Infant Mental Health. The pair were presenting a pilot project they were discussing with the Department of Social Services.

Partnership for Child Developmental Care

Heidi discussed the need to address the developmental and social emotional concerns of children at risk, specifically those in the mild to moderate range, aged 0 to 6. She proposed a partnership with the Department of Social Services to ensure the funds target the intended population. Heidi suggested an integrated care pilot that includes pediatricians, co-located parent family educators, mid-level developmental assessment practitioners, and service providers. The aim of the pilot is to screen, assess, and refer children for appropriate services. Heidi also highlighted the need for an enhanced rate of pay through Medicaid for specialized services provided to infants and young children. She emphasized the importance of collaboration between family educators and pediatricians for seamless referrals and support.

Endorsement Process and Healthcare Project Discussion

Heidi outlined the endorsement process, highlighting that it is an online application requiring college transcripts. She explained the four categories for endorsement, emphasizing that two categories require exams. Heidi also underscored the importance of collecting data and its implications in each practice. The discussion revolved around a project aiming to bridge a gap in healthcare services for young patients by integrating with pediatric providers. The participants praised the project for its effectiveness in addressing insufficient referral sources. However, Shelly raised a concern about the

sustainability of the project due to the workforce crisis in healthcare and the prohibitive time commitment for training, to which Heidi acknowledged the concern.

Virtual Training and Reimbursement Challenges

Heidi discussed the challenges of transitioning to virtual training and supervision due to Covid-19. She highlighted the difficulties in building relationships in a virtual setting and the commitment required to maintain them. Heidi mentioned the consideration of a hybrid model of in-person and virtual meetings and the initiation of some sessions in Spanish. A participant discussed a related project tied to the Federal Government with a reporting requirement. Amy suggested a meeting with Miss Nolan from the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. Heidi then discussed the collection of quantitative and qualitative data for their project, including interviews with families, pediatricians, family educators, assessors or clinicians. She also brought up concerns about a reported decrease in reimbursement and the potential for enhanced reimbursement for endorsed professionals demonstrating expertise.

CCADV Updates on Maternal Mortality and IPV Project

Amy encouraged everyone to share updates throughout the meeting. The next presenters, Devon, Raymond, and Ashley Starfish from the Connecticut Coalition against domestic violence, were expected to give an update on their projects and a piece of legislation presented to the Public Health Committee. Ashley Frechette, the Director of Health Professional Outreach at CCADV, started the presentation with updates on Devon Rayment's project, the preventing maternal mortality due to intimate partner violence project. She discussed the "Intimate Partner Violence and Pregnancy-Associated Deaths in Connecticut" report, which revealed that 33 out of 102 individuals who died during pregnancy or postpartum had experienced intimate partner violence. Ashley emphasized the need for increased education and resources, not just screening, to address the issue. She also mentioned the "AIM CCI IPV Bundle" project, aimed at developing community-based maternal safety bundles to address preventable maternal mortalities and severe maternal morbidity among pregnant and postpartum women outside of hospital and birthing facilities. The project, focused on New London, Connecticut, aims to train staff on proper intimate partner violence screening and education, establish warm referrals and partnerships, and assess the current intimate partner violence screenings.

Ashley Secures Unique Grant for IPV Project

Amy congratulated Ashley for securing the IPV bundle grant for their site, which is one of only two nationwide. Ashley expressed gratitude for the grant and highlighted its significance compared to other five-year grants. Kathleen and Devon also congratulated Ashley, with Devon emphasizing their unique position as the only site granted this project. Ashley discussed the importance of sharing resources and updates about intimate partner violence during pregnancy and postpartum. She shared about a proposed bill that would task the Department of Public Health with creating and

distributing educational materials on the topic. Ashley stressed the importance of education and support in addition to screening for individuals who are pregnant or postpartum.

Next steps

- Heidi and Ashley will consider offering scholarship funding for early childhood education.
- Ashley and Devon will continue to develop and distribute resources for pregnant individuals, particularly those experiencing IPV.
- Ashley and Devon will seek support for House Bill 5322 from local representatives and senators.