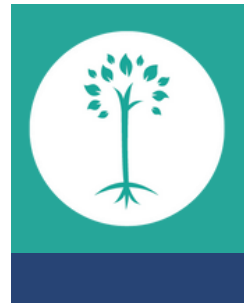


STRENGTHENING AND IMPROVING TITLE V PROGRAMMING IN ILLINOIS

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS
AUGUST 2024



EverThrive Illinois and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) have a long history of partnership to improve maternal and child health outcomes in Illinois. To support IDPH in advancing health equity of Illinois families, EverThrive IL convenes seven Maternal and Child Health Family Councils, made up of people with lived experience utilizing Title V programs statewide. MCH Family Council membership totals 49 people from the following regions: Rockford, West Chicago, Chicago, Peoria, Champaign, Edwardsville, and Marion. MCH Family Council meetings take place quarterly, focusing on each of the Title V domains, helping to identify strengths of current programming, opportunities to improve, and barriers and solutions to accessing services in Illinois.

In June of 2024, EverThrive IL submitted a report identifying the following recommendations to the IDPH Title V program to better serve individuals and families across the state. These recommendations are a compilation of the discussion and feedback we heard from our Family Council members throughout the year.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON TITLE V PROGRAMMING FROM MCH FAMILY COUNCIL MEMBERS

CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

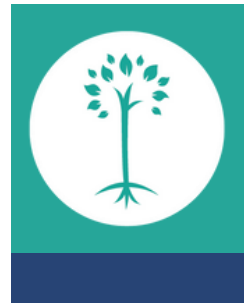
- Increase community awareness and streamline the navigation of resources for families who have children with special healthcare needs.

PERINATAL/INFANT HEALTH

- Work with families to better understand what safer sleeping guides or resources would reduce incidents of sudden unexpected infant death (SUID), better support parents in choosing safer sleeping options, and reduce stigma.
- Work in collaboration with state agencies to uplift the challenges postpartum people are experiencing with breast and chestfeeding. Support programs that offer parents a single point of contact and coordinate numerous services, such as community-centered lactation support and education, transportation to doctors' appointments, case management support, and access to critical supplies like breast pumps, transportation benefits, and other resources needed like diapers.
- Support programs that encourage healthcare and social service providers to provide free breastfeeding supplies to pregnant people giving birth so they have the supplies they need when they are busy caring for their newborn.
- Support programs and policies that decriminalize pregnant people accessing mental health and substance use services. Support community-based mental health programs that partner with trusted organizations, including faith-based communities, to increase community connections and mental health support offered to families.

STRENGTHENING AND IMPROVING TITLE V PROGRAMMING IN ILLINOIS

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS
AUGUST 2024



WOMEN'S/MATERNAL HEALTH

- Work with hospitals to encourage doulas, patient advocates, or family members in the care setting; drawing on Title V-funded programming and family's lived experiences.
- Continue to advocate for implicit bias training among healthcare providers and support shared decision-making between patients and their healthcare teams.
- Analyze survey results on patient feedback on birthing experiences and publish recommendations for addressing negative experiences.
- Support training programs, assessments, and evaluations to improve provider-patient communication in hospital settings. Patients have the right to be informed about the care they are receiving, make educated decisions about their care, and be listened to by their healthcare providers and care teams.

CHILD/ADOLESCENT HEALTH

- Continue to work with partners statewide to highlight the lived experiences of families to impact access to social determinants of health, especially access to healthcare, childcare, and transportation services.
- Develop a statewide resource guide that could be made available to families and professionals working with them that highlights available services in their region of the state.
- Increased in-school support, like expanding capacity at school-based health centers, is critical. Families emphasized the importance of all school staff understanding the differing ways mental health issues (including behavioral issues) can show up in young people. Understanding these issues is also important for identifying young people in need of help and connecting them to the resources they need.
- Focus on increasing the number and capacity of behavioral health professionals available to meet the needs of children and adolescents statewide.

