The Continuum of Care: HIV Testing To Post-Delivery Care for HIV-Positive Women

Rashidah Abdul-Khabeer, MHA RN
Deputy Director
The Circle of Care/Family Planning Council
260 S. Broad Street
Suite 1000
Philadelphia, PA 19102-5076
Phone: 215-985-2606
Fax: 215-732-1252
E-mail: rashidah@familyplanning.org

Women's Health
Preconceptional health

Perinatal Health
Prenatal care

For other organizations/cities/states that may want to replicate this practice, the approximate annual budget was: $150,000

What resources did you use to cover these costs? (Please check all that apply)
☑ City/County/Local government funds
☐ General state funds
☐ MCH block grant funds
☐ SPRANS funds
☐ 330 funds
☑ Other Federal funds
☐ Third party reimbursement (Medicaid, insurance)

BACKGROUND/OBJECTIVES:
Please describe the specific problem(s)/issue(s) that your “Promising Practice” is designed to address. What are the objectives (specific, measurable) of this “Promising Practice?” What were the results you expected to achieve with implementing this “Promising Practice?”

As the incidence of HIV infection has increased in the City of Philadelphia among women of child-bearing, there has been a need to assure that women were made aware of their HIV status as early in the pregnancy as possible, and if positive to educate them to the availability of treatment measure to reduce perinatal transmission. The goals of the Circle of Care Perinatal Transmission Prevention Program includes: 1) increasing the HIV testing and perinatal HIV Prevention Education in community settings, 2) assuring HIV testing of all pregnant women attending the prenatal clinics of the major medical centers in the City; 3) Peer Counselor support and Case management; and instituting rapid testing for women of unknown status at delivery in a medical center serving a significant population of unregistered pregnant women.

METHODS:
Please describe the initiative/approach developed and implemented to address this problem/issue.
Who have been key partners involved in this practice or strategy in your city?
In planning, implementing and evaluating this activity, what has been your organization’s role?

Circle of Care expanded its existing continuum of care for HIV impacted families by utilizing CDC funds in a social marketing campaign to educate targeted areas of the City most impacted by HIV on the benefits of HIV testing. Include in this campaign was a media program, training in collaboration with the PA/Mid-Atlantic AIDS ETC for OB/Gyn and other women’s health providers on HIV and pregnancy, establishing an Expert Panel of OB, Gyn, Perinatologists, HIV Nurse Practitioners and an Ethicist to do case reviews for trends in transmission. Funding under Title IV provides Perinatal case management, Peer Counselors as well as linkages to post partum

Philadelphia, PA
primary HIV care and services. The Family Program of the Circle of Care provides on-going care and support for the impacted families in a “one stop” model in two Pediatric care centers, and continuing case management and other support services through a consortium of providers.

RESULTS:

What are the major accomplishments of this “Promising Practice” to date? Please use quantitative and qualitative data to document your results.

Services have been expanded to include more education within community based organizations and sites, with emphasis on the importance of knowing your HIV status for the health of both yourself and your child. Expanded HIV counseling and testing services have been placed in community based organizations, so that women can be made aware of their HIV status earlier. Women diagnosed as HIV positive are referred into the consortium of providers for coordinated HIV and prenatal care services. Intensive case management is offered to each consumer within the program, and the number of women receiving these services has increased over a three-year period. Peer counselors provide both education and social support at each consumer interaction, and offer additional incentives through consumer baby showers. HIV positive consumers are referred into family programs, where physicians, nurse practitioners, social workers, and other peer counselors meet their medical and psychosocial needs. Family planning and reproductive health services are included in the continuum of services provided by the health network.

CONCLUSIONS:

What are the lessons learned? What works? What doesn’t? What would your group do differently in the future? What is/are the greatest barrier(s) facing implementation? How are these barriers being overcome?

The concept of a continuum of care for HIV positive pregnant women has been extremely successful. Women are able to access services easier, and are more likely to be adherent to medication regimens and other health requirements for HIV positive individuals because of the support network of the program. Intensive case management with assistant case managers for in home support is an integral link in the maintenance of HIV care and prenatal services for these women. Peer counselors have been found to be extremely successful in the maintenance of both HIV care and prenatal services for HIV+ pregnant women.

PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS:

What is the take home message from this promising practice?

The “one-stop” Coordination of care in a comprehensive manner reduces the lost to care for both mother and infant, improves outcomes and assists in identifying issues that could impact the stability of the family in its ability to maintain treatment.