



SUBSTANCE EXPOSED INFANTS IN-DEPTH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (SEI-IDTA) SITE PROFILE

WEST VIRGINIA

LEAD AGENCY: WEST VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

LOCATION: CHARLESTON, WV

PROJECT ABSTRACT

West Virginia's Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) Commissioners and lead staff from the Bureaus of:

- Behavioral Health and Health Facilities,
- Children and Families,
- Medical Services, and
- Public Health

are working together to integrate multiple systems of care for pregnant women and their families across the state, with the goal of improving pregnancy and birth outcomes and enhancing the long-term health and development of children. While illicit drug use in pregnancy is reported to range from 10%-14% nationally, a 2009 West Virginia umbilical cord study found that 19% or approximately one in five babies had evidence of alcohol and/or drug exposure.

For the past three years, the Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities has taken the lead in partnering efforts with the West Virginia Perinatal Partnership, private foundations, higher education, physicians, legislators, and other State agencies to decrease the number of drug-exposed pregnancies in West Virginia. Federal and State funding streams have been mobilized to support outreach and education efforts for physician engagement and community mobilization, and to advance early screening, intervention, treatment and recovery efforts statewide.

West Virginia's leaders understand the economic and personal impact of substance use in pregnancy. With support from the NCSACW, the State hopes to achieve healthy, drug-free beginnings for newborns, improved health and recovery outcomes for mothers and children, and a reduction in future substance-exposed births.

MAJOR PROGRAM GOALS

Goal 1: Decrease the negative effects of prenatal substance exposure on neonates.

Goal 2: Reduce stigma associated with receiving behavioral health and recovery-related supportive services.

Goal 3: Promote consistent screening and interventions among physicians and other health providers.

West Virginia seeks to develop the following strategies, policies and practices which, when implemented, will strengthen the system of care for moms and babies throughout the state:

1. Provide prevention, intervention of FASD and NAS training for physicians, educators, criminal justice system, and social service providers;
2. Partner with key stakeholders to coordinate all related programs statewide;
3. Fund “moms and babies programs” that achieve proven health and recovery outcomes for mothers and children and prevent future substance-exposed pregnancies; and
4. Block legislation or other State policies that might increase service barriers or offer punitive responses for women seeking services.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

- The lead agency is West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau of Health and Health Facilities.
- The Project Liaison and primary point of contact is Kathy Paxton, the Director of the Division on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. Ms. Paxton will chair the SEI-IDTA Oversight Committee meetings, with support from assigned NCSACW Change Leader, Kari Earle.
- The Oversight Committee members, which include lead staff from the state agencies that administer Medicaid, behavioral health, child welfare, and public health services, will assume responsibility for communication about the project with the Core Team, statewide partners and key stakeholders, and the NCSACW.
- Designated Core Team members will report SEI-IDTA updates to the Oversight Committee.

KEY PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERS

SEI-IDTA facilitates effective cross-system collaboration and the development of multidisciplinary partnerships, which are essential to systems change. While not an exhaustive list, the following partners are essential to the success of this project in West Virginia:

Treatment

- DHHR Bureau of Health and Health Facilities
- REA of Hope, Inc. – Recovery Residence for Women
- FMRS Health Systems/Turning Point
- Behavioral Health Association
- WV Perinatal Partnership – Moms and Babies Project
- Pretera – Women’s Treatment Program

Child Welfare

- DHHR Bureau of Children & Families
- Crittention Services, Inc. – Residential Facility
- Lily’s Place
- Early Intervention Services

Recovery Supports

- DHHR Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health
- WV Department of Education, Special Programs
- Benedum Foundation
- WV Health Start

Medical Care

- DHHR Bureau of Medical Services
- West Virginia Primary Care Association
- Marshall University Maternal Fetal Medicine
- Cabell Huntington Hospital
- WVU School of Medicine
- WV Perinatal Partnership
- Women and Children’s Hospital

KEY PERSONNEL INFORMATION

PROJECT LIAISON/PRIMARY CONTACT

KATHY PAXTON

Director, Division on Alcoholism and Drug Abuses (SSA)

Department of Health and Human Resources

Address: 350 Capitol Street; Charleston, WV 25301

Phone: (304) 356-4796

Email: kathy.l.paxton@wv.gov

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