

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Project Title: The Massachusetts Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Initiative

Applicant Name: The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH)

Address: 250 Washington Street, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02108

Contact Numbers: Voice: (617) 624-5901 Fax: (617) 624-5990

E-Mail Address: Ron.Benham@state.ma.us

Web Site: www.mass.gov/dph Project Web Site: www.mass.gov/dph/homevisiting

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the State Title V Agency, is submitting an application in response to the Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program FY2011 Formula Funding. DPH is the state agency designated by the Governor to apply for and administer these funds for Massachusetts.

The Massachusetts' Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) and Executive Office of Education (EOE), in close collaboration with DPH and other state agencies, convened a two-tiered leadership structure consisting of the Massachusetts Home Visiting Task Force and Workgroup, which directed and jointly developed Massachusetts' application. This application was also informed by engagement with cross-agency partners and communities to discuss strengthening systems of care for pregnant and parenting families, assessing community capacity, and informing a process for selecting evidence-based home visiting programs. The MIECHV Task Force and Work Group will continue to work collaboratively with state and local partners to implement the MIECHV Initiative.

Based on the results of the 2010 Massachusetts Home Visiting Needs Assessment, the Commonwealth identified 17 cities and towns as having the greatest need for home visiting services. The communities had high needs in the domains of maternal and infant health, child development and school readiness, child maltreatment, violence, and economic self sufficiency. To address these problems, during the first year of formula funding, the Massachusetts Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Initiative (MIECHV) stated that it would: 1) strengthen and improve the programs and activities carried out under State Title V Agency, 2) improve coordination of services for pregnant and parenting families in high need communities, 3) identify and provide comprehensive evidence-based home visiting services to pregnant and parenting families to improve outcomes for families in high need communities, and 4) enhance a statewide system of care for families and young children. To achieve these goals, MIECHV is implementing interventions on three levels: family/individual, community, and systems of care.

During this second year (FY11) of formula funding the MIECHV will continue to carry out these goals. Specifically, the MIECHV will expand evidence based home visiting to a fifth community; Southbridge, MA. To promote health outcomes at the family level, MIECHV will support the development and implementation of parent support groups to reduce depression, social isolation and lessen child abuse and neglect, and strengthening the focus on healthy relationships and positive parenting. To promote community collaboration and workforce development MIECHV will support agency and community collaboration to avoid duplication, and provide additional training and supervisor services for 17 identified highest need communities in Massachusetts. Finally, to enhance statewide early childhood systems of care, MIECHV will work with local partners to develop a central intake and referral system that will provide a one-time universal home visiting to all families giving birth and provide linkages to a wide array of health and early childhood services.

Massachusetts is well poised to enhance its current evidence-based home visiting programs to improve the health of families and developmental outcomes of children in high need communities. The expansion of the evidence-based models in five high need communities, coupled with community collaboration and systems-building will help Massachusetts strengthen its early childhood system of care. Massachusetts looks forward to the opportunity to contribute to the body of knowledge for evidence-based practices and improve outcomes for families.