

ABCD news brief

NEWS from the Assuring Better Child Health and Development (ABCD) II Program

August 2004

### **The ABCD II Program**

The ABCD II Program, sponsored by the Commonwealth Fund, is designed to strengthen services and systems that support the healthy mental development of young children, ages 0-3. The program focuses particularly on those children who need only preventive care and those who are identified as "at risk" or in need of low-level intervention. Research has shown that services that support young children's healthy mental development can reduce the prevalence of serious emotional disorders and other long-term, high-cost mental health conditions.

The National Academy for State Health Policy administers a component of the ABCD II Program to assist states in creating models of service delivery and financing that promote healthy mental development for Medicaid eligible children. Five states, California, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Utah, were awarded grants for this program in 2004. Although the projects are led by the states' Medicaid agencies, they are working in partnership with other key stakeholders to achieve their objectives. Together, these states form the ABCD II Consortium, a laboratory for program development and innovation that shares its findings with all 50 states.

### **Using Title V to Improve the Health of Mothers and Children**

The Maternal and Child Health block grant, authorized under Title V of the 1935 Social Security Act, is a federal/state partnership to promote maternal and child health. Title V integrates health care with other child and family services such as those provided in child care and school settings. Title V programs also support population-based services such as newborn screening, lead poisoning prevention, and public and parent education. Title V grants are used to meet locally determined needs that are consistent with national health objectives, including reducing preventable disease and death; assuring access to quality health care; and providing family-centered, community-based services for children with special health care needs.

## Collaboration between Title V and Medicaid Programs

State Title V and Medicaid agencies, which serve similar populations and have similar goals, can expand their reach and effectiveness by partnering. Some examples of collaboration related to ABCD II goals are provided from the Consortium states:

### Provider communication

- Title V agencies develop language, and conduct monitoring, of Medicaid managed care contracts for child health and prenatal care. (UT)
- Title V provides technical assistance on development of Medicaid provider manuals (UT).

### Data matching and sharing

- Medicaid administrative data (claims/encounter data and eligibility) are matched with vital records to examine birth outcomes. (IL, UT)
- Medicaid administrative data and childhood immunization data from public health registries are combined to calculate immunization status and provide child-specific immunization information. (IL)

### Family case management

- Title V administers the program to perform outreach and case management services to Medicaid infants, pregnant women, and wards of the state under age five. The Medicaid agency conducts the administrative claiming process which qualifies for federal Medicaid match (IL).

### Screening

- Collaborative programs train providers on screening, establish referrals to the Part C/ Early Intervention Program, and implement mental health consultation lines for primary care providers (IL, UT).

### Medicaid eligibility

- Title V-funded providers conduct Medicaid presumptive eligibility for Pregnant Women (IL, UT).

### Reproductive health

- A pregnancy hotline is partially supported by Medicaid funding on a pro-rata basis (UT).
- Collaboration through a family planning waiver provides family planning and other women's health care benefits to women whose Medicaid coverage is ending (IL, UT).
- A tobacco cessation program for pregnant women, funded by tobacco settlement dollars, draws down a Medicaid match (UT).

### Oral Health

- An oral health case management project is conducted as part of EPSDT outreach. Protocols were developed jointly by the Title V and Medicaid agencies (UT).

## **Building partnerships**

In addition to Title V and Medicaid agencies, other valuable partners have been involved in these efforts, including universities, advocacy groups, provider organizations, and local health departments; although valuable, these partnerships can be difficult to build.

ABCD II states recommend building positive relationships with potential partners, focusing on shared visions, identifying opportunities for “win-win” partnerships, and recognizing the strengths, limitations, and interests of each partner; for example, flexibility and restrictions on funding. In at least one ABCD state, Title V and Medicaid agencies have supported their partnership by defining their relationship and responsibilities through an interagency agreement that describes the respective roles, responsibilities and financial obligations; delineates the outreach and case management services of the MCH population; facilitates the claim for federal matching funds, and describes data sharing and outcome evaluation activities.

For more information on the collaborations described, please contact ABCD II project directors: