

Healthy Births Care Quality Initiative

“Bridging the gap between what we know and what we do.”

The Healthy Births Initiative developed by First 5 LA provides an opportunity to optimize care for pregnant women as part of its goal to improve pregnancy and birth outcomes in Los Angeles County.

Why Quality Improvement for Prenatal Care?

- The plan to improve the quality of prenatal care is drawn from the recommendation of community members in each region of LA County during the planning of the Healthy Births Initiative, and is integral to First 5 LA’s next 5-year strategic plan.
- First 5 LA’s commitment to Los Angeles County includes a commitment towards making measurable and significant progress in three priority goals areas: Early Learning, Health, and Safe Children and Families. Improving health and well-being during pregnancy addresses objectives in each of these goal areas.
- Focusing these efforts through the health care system takes advantage of an existing system that 90% of women access within the first three months of pregnancy.
- Evidence based, best practice pregnancy specific guidelines exist outlining screening, treatment and preventive practices for a number of health, behavioral, and social risk factors that if not addressed can adversely impact the health of both mother and infant. These can impact large numbers of pregnant women through the health care system.
- Often current systems of care are not designed to support delivery of the highest quality care. Strategies now exist to assist health care settings to improve their system of health care, provide care focused on the individual’s needs rather than the system’s needs, and link their clients to community resources. These efforts can lead to improved pregnancy and birth outcomes for LA County families.

Who will participate?

Up to 15 clinical practice sites across Los Angeles County will be selected to participate. Each site will identify a team from within the clinical setting to work together to improve systems within their practice setting. In general, teams consist of three to five people including an administrator, provider and front-line staff member.



What will they do?

Each Team will learn, practice and implement skills related to using best-practice clinical guidelines, quality improvement techniques for rapid systems change, and data tracking and monitoring.

How will this be implemented?

As part of the Healthy Births Initiative LA Best Babies Network is conducting a Breakthrough Series Learning Collaborative™ in Los Angeles County.

- The framework for this Perinatal Care Quality Improvement Initiative builds on and integrates the Care Model, the Improvement Model, and the Learning Model to optimize care for pregnant women.

- Over a 15 month period, each Team from the 15 practice sites will participate in three, two-day “Learning Sessions” or workshops to learn, practice and hone skills, share ideas and learn from each other as well as experts in the field.
- Between workshops the Teams will work within their clinical settings to use their improvement skills to identify opportunities for systems changes that will promote their ability to provide optimal care to their prenatal clients. The changes are designed to be implemented in small tests to evaluate change toward improvement in a short time period.
- Teams will have a range of tools to assist them in this work including: template forms, implementation guidelines, patient registry for managing data and reporting, and a dedicated Extranet where they can post questions and receive answers from others in the group, and monthly conference calls for additional skills building, shared learning, discussion, and progress review.

What topics will be addressed?

- Prenatal nutrition
- Prenatal breast feeding education and support
- Psychosocial factors (Intimate partner violence, maternal depression)
- Infection and Inflammation related to urinary and reproductive tract infections and periodontal disease
- Smoking, substance use and abuse
- Pre gestational and gestational diabetes
- Cultural competency
- Comprehensive postpartum care
- Centering Pregnancy (group prenatal care)

What does LA Best Babies Network Provide?

- Use of the electronic registry for tracking your improvement efforts;
- Data entry support and assistance in using the Model for Improvement to transition to on site data entry;
- Extranet for collaboration and monthly reporting of your improvement efforts;
- Listserv and monthly conference calls for communication and sharing ideas with your colleagues at other sites;
- Links to resources and tools
- Faculty for clinical updates;
- Improvement Advisor for coaching on the improvement process, sustaining your improvements and spreading to others within your agency;
- Continuing education workshops to acquire and strengthen skills, drafts tests for systems change and share progress with others working on improvement; and
- Ongoing efforts to build the Collaborative by engaging new leadership and teams, refining the quality framework based on the recommendations from the teams and literature, seek new evidence based practices and establishing sustainable funding streams to support quality improvement efforts.

What will it take?

- Commitment from leadership
- Time for learning sessions, planning, implementing, and revising changes in the clinical setting, conference calls, and data entry and review.
- Sharing information, challenges and lessons learned.

What will it bring?

- Recognition and data to demonstrate your commitment to excellence.
- Over time improved client satisfaction with improved care, and reduced staff turnover.
- Improved health of the women and infants that you care for.

We look forward to continuing to work with teams across LA County as we continue our shared mission to optimize the quality of care provided to pregnant women so that each child is provided an optimal start in life.

For more information contact Carolina Reyes, MD and Janice French, CNM, MS, LA Best Babies Network at 213-250-7273 and visit www.LABestBabies.org

