

Increasing Home Visiting Referrals through Implementation, Dissemination and Evaluation: Perspectives from Rural Healthcare Providers, 2019

University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center (UNM PRC)

Theresa H. Cruz, PhD, Leona Woelk, MA, Ivy Cervantes, MD, MPH

Research overview

Purpose of research:

- Build on previous research in Bernalillo County that identified healthcare provider barriers to referring to early childhood home visiting (ECHV) programs
- Inform systems-level strategies for increasing healthcare provider referrals to ECHV programs in rural communities
- Identify commonalities and differences between urban and rural areas when referring patients to ECHV programs

Persons interviewed:

- Included 20 family medicine physicians, nurse midwives, obstetricians, and pediatricians working outside of Bernalillo County
- Represented all four public health regions in NM (NE, NW, SE, SW)
- Worked in hospitals, community clinics, and private practice



Barriers in urban and rural communities:

- Lack of knowledge about ECHV/ local ECHV programs
- Time constraints
- No internal referral process
- Limited feedback about referrals
- Concern about funding
- Concern about stigma
- Lack of ECHV promotional skills

Barriers specific to rural communities:

- Concern about competition for clients/ patients
- Concern about potential costs or co-pays
- Limited healthcare provider connection to rural communities related to short-term or part-time status
- Community norms around privacy/mistrust of government or institutions

Future directions for UNM PRC

Messaging:

- Share results of rural study with local ECHV programs throughout the state
- Provide previously developed materials (e.g., provider tip sheet, demonstration video) through local ECHV programs and statewide healthcare provider networks

Education:

- Provide training and technical assistance to healthcare providers in rural areas on ECHV referrals
- Conduct training sessions at statewide healthcare provider meetings
- Provide accredited on-line continuing education for healthcare providers addressing knowledge gaps



Engagement

- Cultivate ECHV champions among rural healthcare providers
- Collaboratively develop systems strategies for addressing the need for a simple, centralized referral system
- Work together with ECHV programs that serve rural communities to develop standard practices around provider outreach and referral mechanisms
- Collaborate with ECHV programs to determine practicality of providing referral feedback to providers

Technology

- Determine feasibility of including ECHV referrals in electronic medical records in rurally-located healthcare settings

The UNM PRC would like to acknowledge the extensive collaborative work accomplished through ongoing, coordinated and aligned efforts by multiple community stakeholders to improve outcomes for children and families in New Mexico through ECHV. The ECHV research conducted by the UNM PRC was designed to be a collaborative component supporting these comprehensive efforts.