

12-2018

Advocating for Support for Families of Pregnant and Parenting Women Impacted by the Opioid Crisis in Pennsylvania

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Recommended Citation

Weiss, Caitlin and Halt, Rosemarie, "Advocating for Support for Families of Pregnant and Parenting Women Impacted by the Opioid Crisis in Pennsylvania" (2018). SKMC JeffMD Scholarly Inquiry, Phase 1, Project 1.

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SKMC 2021
SI PHR Abstract
12/10/2018

**Advocating for support for families of pregnant and parenting women impacted by the
opioid crisis in Pennsylvania**

Introduction:

The perinatal period is a key opportunity for intervention for families impacted by opioid use disorder (OUD). However, in 2016 only 7.6% of treatment facilities in PA offered childcare for parents receiving treatment and only 2.8% of residential facilities offered beds for clients' children.

Objective:

The purpose of this project was to understand the magnitude of the opioid crisis as it affects pregnant women and their children in PA as well as what avenues exist to advocate for policy changes to better support their recovery.

Methods:

1. A policy brief was prepared for the Maternity Care Coalition (MCC) using information from a literature review and policy information from the Regional Overdose Prevention Coalition.
2. Three organizations that serve children and families, including the MCC, convened in Harrisburg to advocate for evidence-based home visiting (EBHV) for families impacted by OUD to be included in the state budget.

3. Key informant interviews were conducted with two local experts in maternal child health using a semi-structured discussion guide. Interviews were recorded and transcribed. Qualitative analysis included content analysis and member checking.

Results:

1. The policy brief was produced for the MCC.
2. The 2019 Pennsylvania budget included \$4.5 million for EBHV for families with a parent with OUD.
3. Key informant interviews highlighted the barriers to recovery for pregnant and parenting women. Opportunities for advocacy were also discussed.

Conclusion:

Funding is needed to expand recovery services that allow children to stay with their parents. Health professionals can advocate for policy changes to meet the needs of families affected by OUD.