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## Advocating for Protective Measures Against Childhood Lead-Poisoning in Philadelphia Rental Homes

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**Advocating for Protective Measures Against Childhood Lead-Poisoning in Philadelphia  
Rental Homes**

Claire Miller, Colleen McCauley\*

**Introduction:** Lead exposure has been linked to delays in development and behavioral problems in children. Over 1,500 children are poisoned by lead each year in Philadelphia; the majority (62%) in rental homes.

**Objective:** The purpose of this project was to understand the impact of lead poisoning on children in Philadelphia, the current policies in place to protect children and the ways in which various stakeholders can advocate for policy changes that will better protect children.

**Methods:** A mixed-methods approach was utilized including meetings with councilmembers, stakeholder interviews and data analysis, visualization and presentation. This information was used to gain councilmembers' support for a legislative bill that would hold landlords accountable and better identify children at risk of lead poisoning.

**Results:** The data gathered identified districts with the highest levels of lead poisoning and lowest levels of landlords in compliance with existing law. Stakeholder interviews underlined the importance of stricter legislation and barriers to passing these laws. The information was

presented multiple times to city council and advocacy efforts resulted in the unanimous passage of a bill in September 2019, that will better protect children in rental homes across the city.

**Conclusion:** Advocacy efforts rely on the support of a diverse range of stakeholders, from whom personal testimony is crucial. Much of the work that goes into passing laws is done by the public. Unexplored opportunities exist for physicians to advocate for their patients; barriers to this work must be identified and addressed.