

MOM-FOCUSED COLLABORATION TO REDUCE PREMATURE BIRTHS AND IMPROVE INFANT HEALTH



In 2013, Bethesda Inc. awarded a \$3.2 million, three-year grant to Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Every Child Succeeds and TriHealth to reduce the preterm birth rate in priority Cincinnati communities, such as Avondale, by 10 percent. The StartStrong program also seeks to reduce the rate of inappropriate emergency room utilization by 30 percent, as well as NICU and ED costs. Cincinnati Children's also is making a substantial financial contribution to the effort and other funders have recently come on board.

Hamilton County has an infant mortality rate more than 60 percent higher than the national average. Less than two-thirds of women in the Avondale area receive prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy, and many newborns lack a high-quality connection to a medical home.

StartStrong is working to transform how women and infants receive health and social care, beginning in Avondale and moving into Price Hill in late 2014.

Three core focus areas are being developed:

- Engaging the community to support pregnant women and their young children, and to encourage women to begin prenatal care as early as possible;
- Improving the referral and enrollment processes to seamlessly connect women to community home visitation programs and service agencies; and
- Improving the experience with healthcare and community support programs to increase mutual trust and communication.

The project is testing a range of new approaches to accomplish these goals. These include focusing on what women need through expanded moms' groups, increasing access to home visitors and community health workers, and tailoring video guides for infant care. It also includes piloting changes in the healthcare system such as doctors spending more time in the community to build mutual trust, accelerating appointments for new pregnancies, and creating care teams of obstetric providers, community health workers and home visitors.



KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

A supportive coalition of health, community and faith leaders has been formed.

Nearly 100 Avondale women have been helped by a home visitor or a community health worker and many more have been assisted through biweekly moms groups.

Prenatal care providers are collaborating for the first time to collect real-time data to track patient entry into the care system and share collective results.

Engagement efforts attracted participation from residents and community leaders:

- Meetings with community leaders have generated support and partnership agreements;
- Nearly 70 adults and children attended the first StartStrong Avondale community conversation event; and
- 96 households were reached through a neighborhood canvassing effort in July.



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