

Children's Special Health Services
June 28, 2010

Children's Special Health Services: CSHS has just completed its 2010 Needs Assessment and 2011 Title V Block Grant, which is due to MCHB on July 14. The review for the MCH Block Grant is August 18 in Dallas. As usual, it will be videotaped back to New Orleans so that key staff can participate in the review.

CSHS recently had two articles accepted for publication in the MCH Journal: "Care Coordination in a Medical Home in Post-Katrina New Orleans: Lessons Learned" and "Receipt of Transition Services within a Medical Home: Do Racial and Geographic Disparities Exist?" The first is about using a care coordinator in a pediatric practice (medical home) in a high risk population with tremendous care coordination needs. The second is an analysis of the 2005/6 National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs data: Nationally, only 42% of youth received services for transition to adult health, work and independence within their medical home (usually their physician's office), and only 38% of youth with special healthcare needs in the southern region received these needed services. Both nationwide, and within the southern region, we calculated a 25% racial disparity rate for receipt of transition services, with White youth more likely to receive services than Black youth. For the southern region, the severity of the health condition, having adequate insurance, formal education, and household income were significant predictors of receiving transition services. These findings imply that improving these predictors will improve receipt of transition services in the south. We are continuing to conduct research that will identify factors amenable to change that will improve medical home and transition rates overall and specifically in Louisiana, to help make our programs more effective.

Louisiana Birth Defects Monitoring Network (LBDMN): LBDMN has a new program manager, Dr. W. Joseph Hicks, who came to us from the Office of Aging and Adult Services. Dr. Hicks is an ob/gyn physician with an MPH from Tulane with experience as a disease surveillance specialist in infectious disease and bioterrorism. Dr. Hicks has already begun working with CDC to identify a web-based software system that can be adapted for use in Louisiana, and is thinking about how our data systems can be integrated to better serve families identified by the system. He will manage our new \$947,403 five year CDC grant. Expansion of this network and integration with other data systems will permit earlier identification and intervention for infants with birth defects as well as educational campaigns to prevent birth defects and their sequelae.

Hearing, Speech and Vision: Lorraine Farr, the Program Manager for HSV, retired June 30, 2010. Her last day of work was June 4. Melinda Peat, an audiologist in Region 9 who has worked in the program on a statewide level for many years, has been selected to take her place. As of today, June 28, this promotion is on hold due to the hiring freeze, however we are hopeful that this promotion will be finalized in the new budget year.