

Office of Public Health (OPH) Quarterly Report to the Developmental Disabilities Council
 Bureau of Family Health (BFH)
 April 19, 2021

Children’s Special Health Services (CSHS) works to ensure that children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN) in Louisiana have access to health care services designed to minimize their disabilities and maximize their probabilities of enjoying independent and self-sufficient lives.

- Children’s Special Healthcare Services (CSHS) - Clinical Services offers direct care clinics for CYSHCNs in all regions, except 1 and 7, to meet specialty care needs in provider shortage areas. CSHS-Clinical Services (Genetics, Sickle Cell, and subspecialty clinics) transitioned to mostly telehealth appointments at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Decisions regarding in-person visits are now being made at the Regional level depending upon staffing capacity, the infection positivity rate, and the ability to provide services safely.
- CSHS-Clinical Services Social Workers continue to provide behavioral health assessments to determine if families are in need of outpatient behavioral health referrals, as well as providing support and resources.
- CSHS-Clinical Services also provides nutritional services in Regions 2 and 6 and hopes to expand to other Regions as the need dictates.
- Any family of a child/youth with a special health need that requires peer support, system navigation, or resource linkage is referred the Families Helping Families network in their respective region or the Family Resource Center. CSHS-Clinical services also refers to other community-based organizations as appropriate.

The Family Resource Center (FRC) now functions as a statewide virtual center to ensure CYSHCN, their families, and health care providers have access to resource and referral services during the pandemic. The FRC offers community referrals, CV19 resources and program updates, health/education transition supports, and system navigation services for Louisiana CYSHCN/families and health care providers. FRC staff will begin providing outreach support services for families identified through Louisiana Birth Defects Monitoring Network in May 2021 which will offer linkage to needed health and community services. Staff will also begin providing support to CSHS statewide clinics to work with families of CYSHCN that require community referrals, system navigation, or resource linkage. FRC staff are available by phone 504-896-1340 between 8am-4pm Monday-Friday or email BFHFamilyResourceCenter@la.gov.

Family Resource Center	
Dec 2020-Feb 2020	
Total Client Encounters	57
Resource Needs Provided	53

Families Helping Families – BFH Project aims to build a coordinated and family-centric statewide CYSHCN resource and referral service system utilizing the collaborative partnership between BFH-FRC and FHF. FHF networks are Louisiana’s statewide parent-to-parent support organization serving individuals with disabilities. Each FHF will be hosting provider capacity

building education events between May and June 2021. Check FHF websites for program details.

CSHS Transportation Assistance Program provides needed transportation assistance for eligible families to attend medical appointments/procedures. Families must seek transportation assistance through their MCO before requesting assistance through CSHS. Families may contact The Family Resource Center or their local Families Helping Families Center for more information.

Transportation Assistance Program July, 2020-February, 2021	
12 families served	Stipend expenditures \$1,281.18

Louisiana Birth Defects Monitoring Network (LBDMN) tracks the occurrence of over 70 structural, functional, and genetic birth defects in Louisiana residents. This work helps to identify environmental conditions, pharmaceutical side effects, or behavioral risk factors threatening Louisiana's newborns. By case definition, we include children diagnosed prior to their third birthday.

Genetic Diseases Program operates a comprehensive statewide newborn heel stick screening (NBS) program meeting national standards as well as ensuring access to genetic evaluation and counseling to residents of Louisiana. Currently the heel stick program screens for 28 genetic conditions. The Genetics Program also operates the Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) Program, which provides resources and information on how individuals diagnosed with sickle cell can receive assistance and care through the Sickle Cell Foundations and Clinics around the state.

Genetics and NBS

- The Health and Welfare Committee of the Louisiana House of Representatives discussed House Bill 316, which proposes mucopolysaccharidosis type I (MPS I) and glycogen storage disorder type II (Pompe) to the Louisiana Newborn Screening Panel. The proposed bill intends to encourage screening for MPS I and Pompe for all infants born in Louisiana so that proactive measures can be employed to reduce the rates of mortality associated with these disorders.
- The Genetic Diseases Program Advisory Committee Meeting is scheduled for April 23.

Sickle Cell

- The Louisiana Sickle Cell Commission is planning a statewide conference for June 2021. The conference will focus on regional, state, and national advances in delivering care for sickle cell. Participants will be able to join the conference virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Louisiana Healthy Homes and Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

(LHHCLPPP) works toward the goal of eliminating childhood lead poisoning as a public health problem through initiatives to promote lead poisoning prevention and coordinate lead abatement projects for low-income families in high-risk areas of the state.

Hearing Speech and Vision - Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program is a national initiative that supports the early identification of infants who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH). The goals of the program are to complete screening before 1 month of age, complete audiologic evaluation before 3 months of age, and enrollment in early intervention before 6 months of age. The program works to ensure all children who are deaf or hard of hearing are identified early and supported effectively in order to have the opportunities to develop the language skills they need to learn, grow and thrive.

- 1st Quarter Advisory Council meeting was held on January 22, 2021. Early Intervention enrollment data and annual scorecard data were reviewed. Quality improvement activities continue to be implemented that target timely and complete reporting. The remaining Council meetings for the year are set for April 23, July 23, and Oct 22, 2021.
- The North Louisiana Services sub-committee works to foster collaboration with all stakeholders to work toward developing a plan to address identified needs/barriers in the northern portion of the state. Smaller meetings took place during 2020 with professionals. A larger meeting (EHDI Collaborative) took place Jan 25th 2021—encompassing a broader group of stakeholders to move toward plan development. Parents, Early Interventionists, Audiologists, and Hospital Screeners were in attendance. A follow up meeting with Audiologists took place in February with plans to develop a parent information sheet that would have timelines/contact info for families of children moving through the diagnostic testing process.
- QI work targeting enrollment in Early Intervention has yielded positive results. Small tests of change were tested in the procedures and protocols for contacting and referring families of newly identified DHH children to Early Intervention. During the 6 month timeframe for testing, there was a 36% improvement rate with 89% of children referred to EI now having a completed IFSP. The tested changes have now been implemented as program protocol.

Louisiana Guide by Your Side (GBYS) is the lead family based organization for the LA EHDI program. GBYS is a program from Hands and Voices (H&V) that provides support and unbiased information from trained Parent Guides to families of newly identified children who are deaf or hard of hearing.

- Parent Guides attended the virtual Annual EHDI Conference March 1-4, 2021. Conference attendees learned strategies to promote knowledge and awareness of successful strategies for implementing comprehensive state-based EHDI programs that include screening, audiologic diagnostic evaluation, early intervention, medical home, reporting, tracking, surveillance, loss to follow-up issues, data integration, and other related surveillance components.
- Monthly Parent Chats are continuing to be offered to families in a virtual setting on the first Thursday evening of each month. Additionally, the H&V Team is meeting monthly to partake in trainings that support the work that they do with families. *Early Brain Development and Language Development*, and *Supporting Families in Developing Long and Short-Term Goals* are two of the recent training modules completed.

BFH Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program is a no-cost, voluntary program that supports the health and well-being of families with young children. MIECHV implements two evidence-based models, Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) and Parents as Teachers (PAT). MIECHV pairs families looking for additional support and mentoring with specially trained registered nurses or parent educators who partner with families and provide personal home visits.

NFP and PAT services:

- Health and developmental screenings for children, promoting early identification of developmental delays.
- Assistance with goal setting and life skills development.
- Parenting guidance on a variety of topics.
- Connections to available resources, including early intervention and early childhood special education services.
- Coordinated care and support once families are connected to needed services.

Nurse Family Partnership (NFP):

- Services and supports are provided to Medicaid-, WIC-, SNAP-, TANF-, and/or SSI-eligible first-time moms and families from pregnancy until the child's second birthday.
- NFP serves moms living in all parishes except Caldwell, East Carroll, Madison, Tensas, Union, and West Carroll.

Parents as Teachers (PAT):

- Services and supports are provided to Medicaid-, WIC-, SNAP-, TANF-, and/or SSI-eligible expectant or parenting families from pregnancy until the child enters kindergarten.
- PAT serves families living in Northern Louisiana and the New Orleans area.

LA MIECHV transitioned services to the exclusive use of telehealth March 2020. This transition is in alignment with public health best practice and guidance from the NFP and PAT national offices. Telehealth will continue to be implemented as long as necessary, to ensure the health and safety of staff and families. **LA MIECHV continues to accept referrals and enroll new clients** during this time. For more information about Louisiana MIECHV's NFP and PAT services, including how to get in touch with a home visitor near you, please call the Partners for Family Health toll free telephone line at 1.800.251.BABY or visit the Partners for Family Health website at <https://partnersforfamilyhealth.org>.

The Statewide Young Child Wellness Collaborative (YCWC) is a cross-agency advisory council, the purpose of which is to provide leadership and informed recommendations to drive shared priority setting and strategic planning across the continuum of supports and services within Louisiana's Early Childhood System.

The YCWC serves as the State-Level Advisory Team for the MIECHV program, and formerly for the SAMHSA-funded Project LAUNCH grant. The YCWC includes representation from BFH, EarlySteps, the Office of Behavioral Health (OBH), Medicaid, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), the Louisiana Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS), LSU

Human Development Center, the Louisiana Partnership for Children and Families, the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, and the Louisiana chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The council completed the process of updating the **Louisiana Developmental Screening Guidelines**, a voluntary set of screening guidelines for pediatric and family medicine providers that aligns with and builds on AAP recommendations and Louisiana EPSDT mandates. These guidelines are intended to inform pediatric providers of the domains, recommended tools, and periodicity for universal comprehensive developmental screening for children in Louisiana. Information on the guidelines is located here: <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/3974>.

The Bureau of Family Health's Developmental Screening Initiative created a Developmental Screening Toolkit to help medical providers integrate developmental screening services into their day-to-day practice. The virtual toolkit uses a quality improvement framework, which allows providers to systematically improve the way health care is delivered to the families they serve. It contains step-by-step information contained in webpages, instructional videos, and downloadable worksheets. It is designed to house all of the information and tools you will need to put the Louisiana Developmental Screening Guidelines into practice in one, convenient spot. Their team can also provide customized training on how your specific clinic can implement developmental screening. Check out the Developmental Screening Toolkit at <https://ldh.la.gov/DevScreenToolkit> to learn more.

BFH in partnership with LA Medicaid and LA American Academy of Pediatrics will host 3 webinars for providers about the Louisiana Developmental Screening Guidelines, recent developmental screening reimbursement policy changes at Medicaid, and how to utilize available developmental screening and referral resources and training. These trainings begin May 4, 2021. Email DevScreen@la.gov for program details and registration information.

BFH Adolescent School Health Program (ASHP) has 60 ASHP-certified School-Based Health Centers (SBHCs) across the state. These health centers are located in public and charter schools and offer comprehensive, primary, and preventive physical and mental health services for students enrolled in the school that houses the SBHC and surrounding schools.

SBHCs worked closely with school administrators and their sponsoring agency to develop re-opening plans that would support each of the three possible instruction models. This collaboration between the school and the SBHC allowed the SBHC to assist the school in COVID mitigation, management of chronic conditions, and meeting the behavioral health and physical health needs of students.

The LDH Adolescent School Health Program website <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/565>.