

## PROJECT BRIEF

### **Health Care Task Force on Pre- and Inter-Conception Care: Optimizing Women's Health and Increasing Access to Primary and Preventive Health Services**

#### **Background**

"Since 1996, progress to improve pregnancy outcomes including low birth weight, premature birth, and infant mortality has slowed, in part, because of inconsistent delivery and implementation of interventions before pregnancy to detect, treat, and help women modify behaviors, health conditions, and risk factors that contribute to adverse maternal and infant outcomes"<sup>1</sup>

#### **Purpose**

Over the past three years, Aurora Women's Health Services brought together a Task Force committed to working together with a strong academic partner to address the diverse needs of Milwaukee County women. The Task Force members conducted assessment activities, created a strategic plan to move a women's health care initiative forward, and submitted an implementation grant request to the Wisconsin Partnership Program.

#### **Capacity Building Goal**

Develop culturally appropriate strategies to improve women's pre-/inter-conception care in Milwaukee County.

#### **Completed Objectives**

- Completed a formative assessment including provider surveys and healthcare consumer focus groups to collect accurate information on current pre-/inter-conception care in Milwaukee County and understand the gaps in services;
- Developed an action plan designed to improve women's access to primary; and preventive pre-/inter-conception care.
- Disseminated findings at nationwide conferences and local forums,
- Applied for funding to continue development grant as an implementation grant titled Healthy Mom Healthy Next Baby.

#### **Timeline**

March 1, 2007 – September 30, 2008

#### **Funding Source**

Wisconsin Partnership Fund for a Healthy Future

#### **Task Force Steering Committee**

*Aurora Women's Health Services:*

Claudette Hamm, RN, MHSA\*

Chris Van Mullem, RN\*

*Aurora Family Service:*

Jane Pirsig

*Aurora Health Care:*

Marge Stearns, MPH

*Center for Urban Population Health*

Jessica Bergstrom, MPH

Melissa Lemke, MA

*Columbia St. Mary's:*

Barbara L. Gesme, RN

*Black Health Coalition:*

Rachel Morgan, RN, BSN

*Milwaukee Health Department:*

Karen Michalski, MA, MSW

Jill Paradowski, RN, MS

#### **Presentations and Publications to Date**

Mason, T., Hamm, C., VanMullem, C. (2009). Improving Outcomes Through Pre-and Inter-Conception Health. Presented at the Healthy Babies Summit and Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN) State Conference in Waukesha, Wisconsin (October).

## PROJECT BRIEF

Bergstrom, J.P., Hamm, C., VanMullem, C., Lemke, M. (2008). Pre- and inter-conception healthcare: A qualitative study of the pre- and inter-conception healthcare needs and experiences of urban women. Presented at the American Public Health Association meeting in San Diego, California (October).

\* Indicates co-chairs of the healthcare task force

<sup>1</sup>Attash HK, Johnson, K, Adams M, Cordero JF, Howse J, *Time to Act on Missed Opportunities to Improve Perinatal Outcomes: preconception care*, Maternal Child Health Journal, 2006.

The Center for Urban Population Health is a partnership among the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Aurora Health Care, Inc. Our mission is advancing population health research and education to improve the health of urban communities.