



SUBSTANCE EXPOSED INFANTS IN-DEPTH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (SEI-IDTA) SITE PROFILE

CONNECTICUT

LEAD AGENCY: CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

LOCATION: HARTFORD, CT

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Connecticut's ChimeData program, administered by the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) since 1980, is the most comprehensive hospital database in the state. Between 2003 and 2012, ChimeData reported a 164% increase in neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS). Hospital stays for these infants also increased by 150% during this time period. Connecticut's NAS infants are more likely to be White (73%), covered by the state's Medicaid insurance program and residing in five (5) Connecticut towns: Hartford, New Haven, Waterbury, Bristol, and New Britain.

Connecticut seeks to advance the capacity of its inter-agency partners to improve the safety, health, permanency and well-being of NAS and other substance exposed infants and support the recovery of pregnant and parenting women and their families through statewide infrastructure development. Connecticut will use in-depth technical assistance (IDTA) from the NCSACW to leverage, enhance, and strengthen the existing Recovery Specialist Voluntary Program (RSVP) collaboration and its linkages across child welfare, addiction treatment, and family courts to improve outcomes for substance exposed infants and their families.

Connecticut's existing RSVP collaboration, established six years ago using in-depth technical assistance from the NCSACW to develop and implement the RSVP program, exists between the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF), Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), Judicial Branch, Advanced Behavioral Health, Inc. (ABH), and the University of Connecticut Health Center (UCHC). This collaboration will be enhanced by adding representation from additional stakeholders, including the education, early childhood, and medical communities, in support of building an infrastructure to prevent and intervene on problems related to Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS). In addition, DCF and DMHAS already have braided funding to hire the first-ever FASD Statewide Coordinator to oversee the development of statewide FASD and NAS policy and practices and serve as the primary point of contact for SEI-IDTA.

CT's SEI-IDTA project will mark the state's first attempt to coordinate an inter-agency effort to address substance exposure among infants related to FASD/NAS. CT's SEI-IDTA project will focus on implementing a statewide infrastructure development program to address FASD/NAS that will include a financial mapping component to identify opportunities for financial support for workforce development, policy, and practices recommended by the inter-agency collaboration during the planning process.

MAJOR PROGRAM GOALS

Goal 1: Assess the state's capacities and needs related to FASD/NAS that will serve as the architecture for: 1) Identifying data infrastructure strengths and challenges; 2) Establishing policy and developing infrastructure for prevention and intervention services including workforce development; 3) Developing recommendations for improving the state's data infrastructure to collect data on prenatal exposure.

Goal 2: Develop a statewide plan to address FASD and NAS in a coordinated fashion to offer a continuum of services to vulnerable families, including prevention, through raising public awareness of services and supports, early intervention, and intensive intervention.

Goal 3: Conduct financial and asset mapping to identify, coordinate, and maximize fiscal resources to support ongoing FASD/NAS efforts.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The lead agency is the Connecticut Department of Children and Families. The Project Liaison and primary point of contact is Mary Painter, LCSW, LADC the Director of Intimate Partner Violence and Substance Use Recovery Services within DCF. Ms. Painter will lead the SEI-IDTA Core Team meetings along with the assigned Change Leader, Linda Carpenter, from NCSACW. Ms. Painter will assume responsibility for communications between the SEI-IDTA Core Team and the NCSACW. Designated Core Team members will report SEI-IDTA updates to the Oversight Committee.

KEY PARTNER AGENCIES

The Substance Exposed Infants In-Depth Technical Assistance program encourages effective collaboration and partnerships, which are essential to systems improvement and change. Cross-system linkages between substance abuse treatment, child welfare, early childhood and education, dependency court, and other service systems are essential to the IDTA scope of work.

Currently, the following partners are involved in Connecticut:

Child Welfare

- Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF)

Courts and Legal Services

- Judicial Branch

Health Services

- Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)
- Advanced Behavioral Health, Inc. (ABH)
- University of Connecticut Health Center (UCHC)

KEY PERSONNEL INFORMATION

PROJECT LIAISON/PRIMARY CONTACT

MARY PAINTER, LCSW, LADC

Director of Intimate Partner Violence and Substance Use Recovery Services

Connecticut Department of Children and Families

Address: 505 Hudson Street; Hartford, CT 06106

Phone: (860) 560-5035

Fax: (860) 560-7066

Email: mary.painter@ct.gov

This site profile is supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. This content represents the work of The Center for Children and Family Futures, and does not reflect the opinions of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.