



Project: Child Care Health Consultants (CCHC)

Summary

The North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCP), in partnership with the NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center (NCCCHSRC), strengthened infrastructure for consistent and high quality Child Care Health Consultation services to increase the percentage of children with high needs who participate in ongoing health care and who are up-to-date on a schedule of well-child checks.

Successes

All NC CCHCs were trained in the new RTT-ELC funded CCHC coaching module. New CCHC's receive the module as part of the CCHC training course to become qualified in NC to deliver CCHC services. On-going coaching supports were offered by three Regional CCHC Coaches. A comprehensive resource library has been developed to support experienced and new CCHCs and their supervisors. Although new, the coaching model showed emerging benefit.

A cross-sector of CCHCs, Resource Center Staff, CCHC Association members, and NCP staff developed a CCHC Service Model to standardize CCHC services. The CCHC Association has agreed to retire the Association's Scope of Practice and endorse the CCHC Service Model as the foundational document for NC CCHC services.

The NC Health and Safety Assessment (HSA) APP was developed and is being actively used by CCHCs across the state. The iOS app and web-based tool facilitates the health and safety assessment process for CCHCs in the field. The APP, can also provide aggregate state level data regarding change in child care facility health and safety following the delivery of CCHC services.

Additional CCHCs were hired in Beaufort/Hyde and Bertie counties and Chowan's CCHC hours were expanded to better meet the needs of child care providers in the Transformation Zone. CCHCs continue to provide Health and Safety coaching and consultation to selected child care providers. Child care providers are selected for service based on County Implementation Team recommendations, through collaboration with other technical assistance providers, or by requests from individual child care providers.

Challenges

Further advocacy for the importance of the CCHC role and its contributions to promoting young children's health and safety is needed. This advocacy is essential for ongoing efforts to identify new, and leverage existing funding sources to enhance the capacity of the CCHC workforce and regional coaching structure. North Carolina's CCHC network will be essential in supporting the new health and safety training CCDF requirements the state must meet.

Lessons

Communities continue to refine the roles of Regional CCHC Coaches and the CCHC Service Model. Clear expectations of CCHCs and coaches should be evident upon selection and further developed after hire through on-going training and coaching supports. Programs and supervisors should provide ongoing evaluation to check the Regional Coach or CCHC's understanding and demonstrated use of technical assistance strategies and essential service elements.

Agencies and communities supporting CCHC services should continue to utilize data to target programs most in need for CCHC services (e.g., those with low quality ratings, Environmental Rating scores, Sanitation scores, etc.). Using data from assurance systems that are population-based (e.g., sanitation visits), could help determine which programs are most in need of CCHC services and help CCHCs prioritize which programs to target.

The Regional CCHC Coaches are critical components in the statewide CCHC infrastructure. Regional coaches are a conduit for receiving information related to successes and barriers in the field; therefore, critical voices in ongoing continuous quality improvement discussions. They fill the role of not only coaches, but also consultants for health and safety questions CCHCs have. Coaches are frequently asked to fill the role of trainer for new and seasoned CCHCs.

Closing Thoughts

DCDEE will support a regional coach for the western part of the state. An eastern regional coach function will be filled by the State Child Care Health Consultant position within DPH. The NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center is working with the CCHC Association to explore the development of a mentorship program that would pair seasoned CCHCs with new CCHCs.

NCPC and the Resource Center has developed a series of "how to" Health and Safety Assessment APP learning modules that will offer sustained user help and other CCHC resources beyond the end of the grant. The NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center is exploring potential funding opportunities for coaching and/or the Health and Safety Assessment APP with UNC Maternal and Child Health's Corporate and Foundation Development office.