Infants with Prenatal Substance Exposure: Developing a Plan of Safe Care for Infants and Mothers
Bringing Systems Together

Family Recovery, Safety and Stability

A Program of the

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment

and the

Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children’s Bureau
Office on Child Abuse and Neglect

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Administration for Children and Families
www.samhsa.gov
Child Welfare as the Golden Ticket

Getting off the Merry Go Round

Flip the Script

Data Driven Practice
Making Collaborative Policy and Practice Work for Families

Early Intervention

Data Analytics

A Differential Approach
“health-care providers involved in the delivery or care of substance exposed infants must notify child protective services, and a plan of safe care is to be developed...

for infants born and identified as being affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms, or a Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder”
To identify infants at risk of child abuse and neglect as a result of prenatal substance exposure, so appropriate services can be delivered, ensuring the safety and well-being of infants, their mothers and their families.

“Except that such notification shall not be construed to—
Establish a definition under Federal law of what constitutes child abuse or neglect; or
require prosecution for any illegal action.”
A Reuters News Agency survey of state child protection officials and an examination of state statutes show that in December 2015, no more than nine states and the District of Columbia have laws or policies and procedures to implement the federal provisions.
…to ensure the safety and well-being of such infant following release from the care of healthcare providers, including through –

I) addressing the health and substance use disorder treatment needs of the infant and affected family or caregiver...
...maintain and disseminate information about best practices relating to the development of plans of safe care...
... the development and implementation by the State of monitoring systems regarding the implementation of such plans to determine whether and in what manner local entities are providing, in accordance with State requirements, referrals to and delivery of appropriate services for the infant and affected family or caregiver.
...a report that includes:

- The number of infants for whom a plan of safe care was developed.
- The number of infants for whom a referral was made for appropriate services, including services for the affected family or caregiver.
The Road Ahead

Notification

- Identifying affected infants
- Defining prenatal substance exposure – affected and demonstrating withdrawal
- A differential lens – notification and child abuse/neglect report
Plan of Safe Care

• Who coordinates and oversees? Where does it live?

• How different from the hospital Discharge Plan, child welfare Safety Plan and Case Plan, substance use Treatment Plan, infant Care Plan?

• In cases in which a child welfare case is determined unnecessary and the infant and family are still in need of services, how are services accessed?
Timing

- Identification at birth – too late?
- Identification of use during pregnancy – child welfare involvement?
- Ongoing support, monitoring and intervention
New Resource!

Purpose: Support the efforts of states, tribes and local communities in addressing the needs of pregnant women with opioid use disorders and their infants and families.

Audience
- Child Welfare
- Substance Use Treatment
- Medication Assisted Treatment Providers
- OB/GYN
- Pediatricians
- Neonatologists

National Workgroup
- 40 professionals across disciplines
- Provided promising and best practices; input; and feedback over 24 months.

Substance-Exposed Infants, In Depth Technical Assistance

States Receiving In-Depth TA to Improve Practice and Policies

- Connecticut
- Kentucky
- Minnesota
- New Jersey
- Virginia
- West Virginia

CHARM Collaborative Case Study

Empanelled Child Protection Team, Title 33, 4917
- Designated by the DCF Commissioner
- Team members able to share client information for the protection of child safety

Child Welfare Assessment During Pregnancy, 33 VSA, Chapter 51
- 30 days prior to the birth of the infant
- Defined as:
  - Positive toxicology screen for illegal or non-prescribed substance
  - Physician certifies use of illegal or non-prescribed substance
  - Diagnosed with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome or
  - Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
CHARM: Key Elements of Collaborative Practice

- Shared philosophy
- Formal communication and information sharing protocols
- Early identification and intervention
- System of support and service engagement at multiple points in time