Addressing Racial Disparities in Birth Outcomes in NC

April 4, 2011
Perinatal Health Committee Series Overview
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The Challenge
- Over 60% of all child deaths in NC occur prior to the first birthday. (1000+/yr)
- Deaths related to perinatal conditions and birth defects represent the 3rd leading cause of death for children 1-9.
- Racial disparity gaps in child deaths vary among age groups. Gaps are the widest among deaths for children under the age of one. As such the disparities in birth outcomes drive NC’s overall inequities in child death.
- African American children represent 24% of the population but 48% of the deaths due to perinatal conditions.

Child Fatality Task Force
- Charged with making and implementing recommendations for changes to laws, rules and policies to support the safe and healthy development of our children and to prevent child abuse, neglect and death.
- Purpose is to develop a communitywide approach to understand the causes of childhood deaths, and identify any gaps or deficiencies that may exist in the delivery of services to children and their families.
- Underlying value: All children in North Carolina deserve to be safe, healthy and well. The future prosperity of any society depends on its ability to foster the health and well-being of the next generation. NC has show an ability and willingness to design successful solutions to improving the health and well-being of our children.

Healthy North Carolina 2020
Maternal and Infant Health Indicator – Objective #1
- Currently, the death rate of African American babies is 2.45 times the death rate of white babies. North Carolina ranks 21st (among 36 reporting states) for this disparity.
- This rate was 2.75 in 1998. North Carolina used to rank 26th in the national (among 35 reporting states) for the highest disparity. Since this time NC has seen an overall decrease of about 10.9% in the disparity rate.
- NC Goal, by 2020 this rate will be decreased to no more than 1.92 times. This represents NC’s current pace of decline with an additional 10% improvement over pace.

Series Planning Process
- Environmental scan & feedback from committee members
- Setting objectives & purpose for this work
- Work Group Members
  - Elisa Rowley
  - Amy Mudler
  - Melinda Harwell
  - Mike Weikle
  - Jon Holliday
  - Barbara Petrik
  - Gwendolyn Huggins
  - Jennifer Fulton-Bledsoe
  - Melissa Lamb
  - Zuleyka Rangel
  - Debbie Hanes
  - Jeff Livingston
  - Chuck Varviret
Perinatal Health Committee Series

Objectives

- Increase our collective knowledge and understanding of health inequities in birth outcomes and any evidence and best practices available to address those inequities across North Carolina.
- Increase connections among members of the PHC and others who have an interest in working together on this issue.
- Develop a response to this issue which could include study, policy, research, program or legislative items.

Minutes and Presentations will be posted.

- April 4, 2011 from 1-4pm
- May 9, 2011 from 1-4pm
- June 6, 2001 from 10am-1pm

Guidelines

- Listen
- Ask for questions and clarification
- Assume that we can move forward on this issue
- Accept our collective responsibility for all babies in North Carolina
- Consider reviewing additional materials or articles

Additional Resources

If you are interested in learning more...


Contact

- Sarah Verbiest, Center for Maternal and Infant Health at 919-843-7865 or sarahv@med.unc.edu
- Joe Holliday, NC Division of Public Health at 919-707-5711 or joe.holliday@dhhs.nc.gov
- To join the Perinatal Health Committee (or sign up for the listserv or share materials etc) contact Elizabeth Hudgins, ED to the Child Fatality Task Force at 919-707-5626 or elizabeth.hudgins@dhhs.nc.gov