Making Change Happen

The UNC Center for Maternal and Infant Health aims to improve the health of North Carolina’s women and infants by providing quality collaborative care, translating evidence-based strategies into practice, and developing new approaches to complex problems. We focus our efforts on leading, teaching and caring - here at UNC, across the state and beyond. We are excited to share a snapshot of our work with you. Thanks for your partnership!

Click here to meet our full team!

The North Carolina Preterm Birth Prevention TeleHealth Network

While premature birth is a complex challenge, there are evidence based strategies that have been proven to reduce risk. Together with the UNC OB/GYN Dept. Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine and Community Care of North Carolina (CCNC), the CMIH is aiming to disseminate best practices through the North Carolina Preterm Birth Prevention TeleHealth Network. This project is supported in part by the Duke Endowment.

On May 23, 2016, approximately 300 individuals, including providers, pregnancy care managers, and partners from organizations and agencies across the state, participated in the North Carolina Preterm Birth Prevention Symposium at the Friday Center in Chapel Hill. Presentations covered a range of topics, including the current landscape of preterm birth in North Carolina, health equity, obesity, progesterone, postpartum care, multifetal gestation, tobacco use, opioid use, and alignment with national priorities. Exhibitors provided resources and informational materials to attendees. For additional information about this event, or to view presentation recordings and slide sets, please visit our website.

New Projects

We are excited to announce our newly-funded projects:

You Quit, Two Quit will expand services to provide training and assistance on evidence-based tobacco screening and cessation for providers who serve women of reproductive age in NC. This project is funded by the NC Department of Public Health.

The 4th Trimester project brings together new mothers, health care providers, researchers and other stakeholders to create studies to build knowledge about postpartum health issues. This study is funded by Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI).

Care4Moms researches the health care needs and experiences with health care services for mothers of medically-fragile infants. This study was supported by grant R40MC29465 Maternal and Child Health Research Program, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, (Title V, Social Security Act), Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services.

Bowes/Cefalo Research Award

The UNC CMIH is pleased to announce two recipients of the 2016 Cefalo / Bowes Young Researcher Award, established by Dr. and Mrs. Watson Bowes and Dr. and Mrs. Robert Cefalo.
In addition to the Symposium, the North Carolina Preterm Birth Prevention TeleHealth Network developed a series of Pregnancy Medical Home Care Pathway Packages, which include patient education materials, algorithms and short webinars. This project has funded enrollment in the Perinatal Quality Foundation’s CLEAR certification program for sonographers across the state. We have also established maternal-fetal telemedicine sites and continue outreach to offer this opportunity to rural practices in North Carolina.

Finally, technical assistance has been provided to practices throughout the state as part of the You Quit, Two Quit program. This service includes training on motivational interviewing techniques, billing and reimbursement, as well as the evidence-based brief counseling intervention - the 5As. Over 20 practices have received TA - this resource is still available to those interested. To learn more about this project and access resources, please visit our website.

Making a Difference One Family at a Time
Quality, Compassionate, Coordinated Care for Complex Babies

The Center for Maternal and Infant Health provides special, personalized care for families with complicated pregnancies and babies with serious medical problems. Care coordinators support families from diagnosis through discharge and beyond. Coordinators help buffer families from the added worries and difficulties that may come with receiving complex care in a new, unfamiliar place. They also teach families how to advocate on behalf of their special babies. To learn more about our services click here.

Currently, our perinatal care coordinators, Lisa Welborn, Maya Lindley, and Lori Carter, are serving 122 complex infants and 114 pregnant mothers with fetal diagnosis of congenital anomalies. In the past year, they have coordinated care for 20 pregnant women referred to the fetal surgery program and supported 20 families with perinatal palliative care. The team partners closely with the UNC Special Infant Care Clinic that served 513 complex infants and families over the past year. These numbers do not include the many calls they answer each week for assistance from families who are still experiencing challenges in getting their special-needs toddlers and young children the services they need. Quality, compassionate, bilingual care coordination is the cornerstone of the Center.

This award provides start-up resources to study issues associated with maternal and infant morbidity and mortality. Laura Carlson, MD, will use this award to study issues related to decisional aids and genetic counseling. Nurain M. Fuseini, MD, will focus on Human Papillomavirus and Preterm Birth in Lusaka, Zambia. Congratulations to Drs. Carlson and Fuseini!

Thank You to Our Clinic Partners
We appreciate all of the physicians, nurses, pregnancy care managers from clinics across our service area for the collaborative spirit you demonstrate as we work together to provide quality care to moms and babies. We have enjoyed visiting many outlying clinics this year and look forward to more visits soon. We are excited about the coming year as we partner on multiple initiatives, including ensuring that more women complete a postpartum visit and collaborative perinatal education efforts. Learn more!

Our Newest CMIH Member

Congratulations to Suzanne Woodward, our Communications Director, and her husband Blair on the birth of their son on July 11th!

Taking Health Informatics to the Next Level

In September we were fortunate that Marshall Clark joined our team as our new Health Information Director.

Over the past 10 months he has worked to secure our data and websites, generate research data and transform our systems. There are many great things ahead for us with his leadership!

17P: Quality Improvement

Focused on reducing the risk of recurring preterm birth, the CMIH has administered the NC 17P Initiative since 2005. CMIH recently offered on-site technical
Our clinical team, which consists of specialists in the field of maternal-fetal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, and pediatric specialty care and surgery, meets weekly to develop unified plans for each patient and family. This team also uses this weekly meeting to enhance their education as they discuss best practice in perinatal health and to learn from other specialists in the field about new medical procedures and treatments. We are grateful for the knowledge, skill, and care that our clinical team provides to our patients and their families. Click here to learn more about our clinical team and partners.

Our NEW website!
Have you heard the news? MomBaby.org has a fresh look!

Our website is designed to provide information on improving outcomes for moms and babies. Content includes:
- Evidence-based clinical practice algorithms,
- Perinatal tobacco cessation technical assistance,
- Recurring preterm birth prevention with 17P,
- Postpartum care,
- Preconception wellness,
- Clinical services for high risk moms and babies.

Educational materials for clinicians as well as for patients (English and Spanish) are now easy to find. You can also stay current on our many research and educational projects.

New Publications by the CMIH Team

In addition to doing great work to serve clients and providers, we are contributing to science by sharing our work.


This article was selected by Springer Publishing as an article that “could change the world.”


Continued Commitment to Advancing Equity

The CMIH continues its commitment to advancing equity for mothers, babies, and families across NC and beyond. This includes building the CMIH team’s skills in understanding and addressing racism by supporting their participation in training and workshops, such as those offered by the NC-based Racial Equity Institute.

Trisomy 13/18 Workgroup

The Trisomy 13/18 Workgroup is an interdisciplinary group brought together by Dr. Wayne Price to improve UNC’s approach to the care of pregnant women and children in the context of Trisomy 13 or 18 diagnosis. They are exploring a number of areas:

- Increasing the consistency and accuracy of communication
- Improving caregiver/provider understanding of management options at UNC
- Increasing the sensitivity around the terminology used
- Improving collaboration between family and caregivers, and among medical providers
- Understanding the values of families and setting appropriate goals based on those values
- Improving provider/caregiver understanding of family decision-making

We have convened meetings of various specialty groups and collected historical data on outcomes for these families here at UNC. Next steps are to enlarge the group to include the voices of nurses and others caring for these families, as well as to prepare educational materials and training sessions relevant to the issues identified.

Support Our Work

Please consider supporting our work. Monetary donations are always welcome to support the unique needs of our families.

For example, a monetary donation...
With support from public and private funders, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the CMIH leads the national Preconception Health and Health Care Initiative. In this highly visible national role, the CMIH supports a leadership team made up of over 70 agencies, as well as 5 work-groups that focus on policy, surveillance, clinical care, consumer outreach and public health. The vision of the PCHHC is that all women and men of reproductive age will achieve optimal health and wellness, fostering a healthy life course for them and any children they may have. The past 10 months have been a whirl of activity for the PCHHC.

Under the direction of Suzanne Woodward, the Initiative began rolling out a new consumer-facing campaign, Show Your Love, beginning with showyourlovetoday.com, the first and only national consumer-focused preconception health educational and community-building platform in the US. The Show Your Love campaign was launched on June 14, 2016, and over a single week, the Show Your Love launch press release was picked-up by 183 media outlets - reaching 85,559,749 Unique Monthly Visitors online. The Show Your Love Facebook page posts reached 1,178 people and the SYL Twitter handle had 33.4K impressions, 1,730 profile visits and 118 NEW followers.

The PCHHC hosted a Men's Health Week Tweet Chat: #PCHchat, which reached 323,825 accounts, had 4,804,200 impressions, with 104 people/organizations that contributed to the #PCHChat conversation.

Partners across the US promoted news and blogs penned by Director Sarah Verbiest, including: March of Dimes' News Mom's Need (2 blogs), NICHO blog, UNC OBGYN feature/newsletter, Healthy Teen Network blog, TheNC blog, OMH's PPE Webinar (Blog/Newsletter), and CDC NCBDD newsletter. All together: we potentially reached OVER 90 MILLION people through SYL Launch Week promotions!

Before and Beyond, Health Provider Resource & Training website was developed and is supported by the CMIH team. In the past 9 months, website traffic has more than doubled on average each month (increasing from 1,2 thousand unique monthly visitors in October 2015 to more than 2.4 thousand monthly between Nov 2015 - Jun 2016). In addition to regularly refreshing content and site organization, the CMIH teamed up with Albert Einstein College of Medicine to re-accredit and update the free Continuing Education modules available.

Before, Between & Beyond Pregnancy website was developed and is supported by the CMIH team. In the past 9 months, website traffic has more than doubled on average each month (increasing from 1.2 thousand unique monthly visitors in October 2015 to more than 2.4 thousand monthly between Nov 2015 - Jun 2016). In addition to regularly refreshing content and site organization, the CMIH teamed up with Albert Einstein College of Medicine to re-accredit and update the free Continuing Education modules available.

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preconception health into clinical care for every woman. Read more about the Health Systems Collaborative and view our Health System partners.