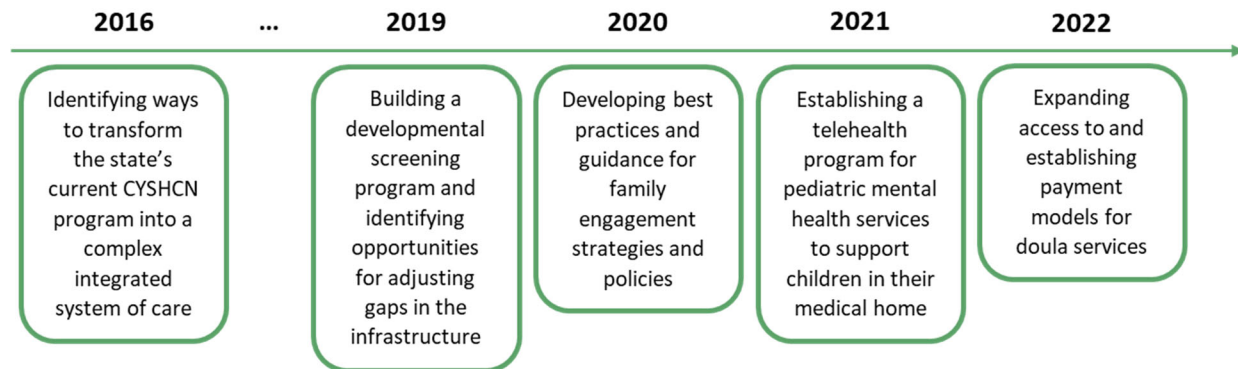


Building Capacity to Respond to Emerging Public Health Needs in Virginia

Since 2016, Virginia Title V leaders and partners have worked with the Center to transform health systems across multiple topical areas, including:



VA leaders shared that they have achieved more than they could have imagined for many of these projects. The responsive and steady support from the Center over the years has provided VA leaders with the tools and skills to build staff capacity to promptly address a range of emerging public health challenges. Examples of how Center tools and skills influenced their work and impact are summarized below.

Center tools and skills



Center tools and skills led to **changes in mindset** about work. For example, VA leaders described how structuring their work around implementation stages allowed them to recognize who needed to be involved at which step and how roles and responsibilities would change throughout a project. They also emphasized how applying a strategic thinking perspective to their work allowed them to identify how programs, funding, roles and responsibilities align to achieve a project goal. Empathy mapping was also a valuable exercise to understanding perspectives of their customers, such as “a birthing person who may be doula curious, a skeptical healthcare provider, [and] potential and existing doulas.”



Engagements with the Center also **provided opportunity for reflection**, which helped give them clarity about making their work intentional and knowing what to focus on next. For example, while identifying gaps in their developmental screening infrastructure it was apparent that a more intentional approach was needed with engaging families in the process. Consequently, they joined the Learning Journey program in 2021 to improve workforce capacity around family engagement. Recognizing they could not work on all things at once, they continued to engage with the Center for additional support as new challenges arose.

Impact



Center tools, skills, coaching, and peer learning opportunities have supported achievement of many impressive outcomes. First, the team was able to support partners who advocated to **secure state funding** to establish a telehealth program for pediatric mental health services. They reflected, “*We had groups who went to our legislative body to request funding. It was based on having done our homework and having some of these transformational policies and a firm foundation in terms of what the program should look like and the service that could be*

delivered, that ultimately allowed us—even though everybody else was frozen and didn't get their money—we got our money, and a lot of it."



Second, work with the Center prepared the team to **influence state policy** through providing technical assistance and education to legislators around mental health screenings. They were able to articulate to their state legislators the importance of thinking about mental health screening as a preventative measure throughout the life course. As a result, the focus among providers shifted from screening children when there are concerns towards screening proactively using the age-appropriate tools that were developed.



Lastly, despite changes in key Title V leadership and programmatic positions, VA leaders have been able to maintain **momentum** on advancing health transformation. VA leaders shared this was in part due to the Center providing a sense of stability —they knew the Center was always available to provide expert assistance. Additionally, VA leaders made sure materials from Center engagements were shared with other Title V staff. This knowledge sharing resulted in the team being able to continue making progress on their transformation projects through staff changes. VA leaders were also able to expand upon and dive deeper into areas of their projects by matching with students from the **Title V internship program**. Interns led critical parts of their projects that fell beyond the capacity of their team, including literature reviews, key informant interviews, and formal presentations of findings to Title V leadership. Work completed by interns was also incorporated into their Title V grant application.

To learn more about how the Center can help advance your state's Title V health systems transformation projects, please see our [current program offerings](#).