



National **MCH** Workforce
Development Center
Advancing Health Transformation

Building a Workforce Development Office to Strengthen MCH Services in Mississippi

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Mississippi Team Members

Director

Training Coordinator

Coordinator

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Mississippi's Learning Journey

Mississippi's team engaged with the National MCH Workforce Development Center to strengthen the new Title V MCH Workforce Development Office (now called the MCH Engagement and Coordination Office, "the Office") and its programs. The primary goal was to build a diverse and culturally sensitive workforce by providing training and development opportunities for Health Services Division staff, health students, and external partners. The team developed a strategic plan with four pillars: 1) Build an organizational culture focused on the workforce; 2) New approach to training and development, "growing staff with joy"; 3) Improve communication; and 4) Focus on leadership topics. Six months after they ended their Learning Journey, they were able to provide a staff orientation and address staff training in priority areas, including leadership skills, and maintain their website with a training calendar for MSDH staff and community partners in order to meet the workforce needs of Title V professionals throughout Mississippi.

Leading Through Change: Mississippi's MCH Workforce Development Office

Eighteen months after the Learning Journey, the Office added a new department called Public Health Social Workers, which provides integrated services across Health Service Programs in partnership with Healthy Moms/Healthy Babies Home Visiting Case Management, Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs, Lead Poisoning Prevention and Healthy Homes Program, Newborn Screening and Genetic Services, along with general clinic referrals. Team Leads shared that the original team members who participated in the Learning Journey have increased their capacity and skill set through their engagement with the WDC. They took ownership of the new office and began to develop ideas for outreach and expansion of services. While the MCH Engagement and Coordination Office Director turned her attention to supporting and building the Public Health Social Worker project, the Learning Journey team was able to support the MCH Engagement and Coordination Office activities. For example, they were able to build capacity for the Public Health Social Workers as well as other programs by working on Standard Operating Procedures and Guidance documents.

"The WDC has been very instrumental in providing support and resources for the Mississippi MCH Engagement and Coordination Office. Center coaches provided the umbrella concept to assist with narrowing our focus on four topics, aligning the work under these topics and keeping the focus of the team on the topics."

The team leads attribute their impact to the gains they have made in diversifying and strengthening the capacity of the workforce to lead transformational change. The purpose of the MCH Engagement and Coordination Office is to build MSDH MCH and Health Service staff knowledge surrounding maternal and child health concepts. Prior to the development of the MCH Engagement and Coordination Office, there was limited focus on this within MSDH due to lack of staffing capacity to provide this. As a result of the team's body of work and advocacy promoting the importance of workforce development, they have influenced both the Mississippi Department of Health as well as direct service provider partners.