

Cross-sector Innovation Initiative Profile: Chatham County Public Health Department (NC)

Project Title

Equity for Moms and Babies Realized Across Chatham

Project Summary

Equity for Moms and Babies Realized Across Chatham (EMBRACe) seeks to ensure successful and equitable birth outcomes for women and babies in Chatham County, NC, through system and service alignment across the following partners: Chatham County Public Health Department, Chatham Hospital, UNC Family Medicine, Piedmont Health Services, Chatham County Department of Social Services and the Chatham Health Alliance. The proposed project is an outcomes-focused initiative launched out of ongoing efforts in the county to work collaboratively across sectors to address the root causes of the county's most pressing health disparities.

In pursuit of system alignment, we will establish a formal structure of collaborative governance, engage community members from the populations we serve, build systems for data sharing that facilitate data-driven decision-making and seamless service alignment, and cultivate innovative revenue and funding opportunities. We will align our services to ensure that all women who receive prenatal, intrapartum and postpartum services from project partners are treated with dignity and respect, establish an evidence-based continuum of services, and lead data and community-informed systems-level initiatives to address psychosocial barriers to positive birth outcomes.

Community Description

Chatham County, which encompasses 709 square miles, is known for its rich agricultural heritage and bucolic lifestyle. Located between two of the state's largest population and economic centers, the county has experienced double digit growth since 2010 but two-thirds of the 71,472 living in Chatham County still live in rural areas. The overall racial/ethnic composition of Chatham County is: 71.6% white, 12.7% African American and 12.5% Hispanic. With a median income of \$58,860, an unemployment rate of 3.9%, and poverty rate of 11.7%, Chatham County performs well when compared to other counties and the state as a whole. Additionally, the county ranks in the top 10 of North Carolina counties for life expectancy, health behaviors, and health outcomes. However, there are notable economic and health inequities in the county. African Americans and Hispanic/Latinos in Chatham County are two to three times more likely to be living in poverty, the top 5% of earners in the county make 28 times more than the poorest 20% of households, and life expectancy for African Americans is nearly 10 years shorter than whites. Disparities in geography exist as well. For instance, poverty rates in the northeast corner of the county are three to four times lower, and the median income is nearly two times higher, than in the southwest. Siler City, located in the western part of the county, has a median income under \$35,000 and an unemployment rate of 9.8%.

Expected Impact on Systems Alignment, Population Health, and Health Equity

Through systems alignment we seek to build the foundation for a sustained accountable care community driven by the voices of those we serve. The establishment of a collaborative governance structure that includes the sharing of leadership, decision-making, data, and funding will allow us to more effectively mobilize our collective strengths towards achieving our shared aims. By building our aligned services around the drivers of inequities in birth outcomes and leveraging clinical data to inform policy and systems-level interventions, we will improve outcomes for the women and infants we serve and create an environment that fosters health equity across the county.

Key Partners

- Chatham County Department of Social Services
- Chatham Health Alliance
- Chatham Hospital
- UNC Family Medicine
- Piedmont Health Services

Grantees are working toward population health and health equity priorities, as well as addressing one or more pillars of alignment (as indicated by a checkmark below).

Population Health and Health Equity Focus

- Maternal, child and adolescent health

Systems Alignment Areas

- ✓ Share a vision and a set of priority outcomes
- ✓ Create a shared data and measurement system
- ✓ Establish appropriate financing with incentives and accountability
- ✓ Strong governance with leadership and defined relationships driven by the voice and participation of community members

Cross-sector Innovation Initiative Overview

With funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Center for Sharing Public Health Services and the Public Health National Center for Innovations are co-leading the Cross-sector Innovation Initiative, a joint effort that aims to understand and support innovative multi-sector partnerships between public health, healthcare, and social services that ultimately transform practice towards working in alignment to improve population health, wellbeing, and equity for all.