

## OMH STATE PARTNERSHIP GRANT TO IMPROVE MINORITY HEALTH (STATE PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE TO ADDRESS HEALTH DISPARITIES)

**April 2017**

### **Project Title: Addressing Infant Mortality among U.S.-born African Americans and Developing a Health Profile on African American Mothers and their Infants Living In Hennepin County Using a Health Equity Analysis**

The project addresses the wide spectrum of factors that contribute to the high infant mortality rate among U.S.-born African Americans living in Hennepin County. Hennepin County has the largest concentration of African Americans in Minnesota, and here the infant mortality rate among U.S. born African Americans is 3.4 times higher than Whites. The project acknowledges that the difference in the infant mortality rate may be explained not only by variations in maternal characteristics, behaviors and access to health care, but also by other factors including social issues and individual and family circumstances. It utilizes a community engagement model that will bring together the perspectives and understandings of the community about the factors that create and sustain disparities, and will activate the community to address these factors through a Health in All Policies approach.

**Grant Period:** August 2015 to July 2020

### **Goals:**

1. Strengthen the capacity of the U.S.-born African American community to change and conditions under which babies are born to maximize their opportunity for a healthy start
2. Enable the U.S.-born African American community to advance a health equity narrative that includes all of the factors of social determinants of health (SDOH) that contribute to infant mortality among African Americans in Minnesota
3. Ensure that women and babies are healthy and disparities in infant mortality among U.S. born African Americans in Hennepin County are eliminated



### **MDH's SPG Over the Years**

**2010-2013** - focused on building MDH capacity to collect, analyze, and report on the health status of racial and ethnic communities in MN

**2013-2015** – focused on building the U.S.-born African American community's capacity and action by increasing knowledge of evidence-based maternal child health and family home visiting (FHV) models of care and SDOH

**2015-2020** - addresses the high rate of U.S.-born African American infant mortality through a health equity lens by using a community engagement model

## Objectives

1. Develop a shared decision making and leadership model for reducing infant mortality rates through a health equity lens
2. Develop the skills to work in authentic partnerships
3. Increase the knowledge regarding the root causes of infant mortality
4. Identify the current dominant narrative about infant mortality and develop a new narrative
5. Enhance the skills to strategize and support policy, systems, and environmental changes that will improve the key conditions for health
6. Identify structural barriers to healthy birth outcomes
7. Develop a list of potential strategies and interventions based on a health equity approach to address the high rates of infant mortality disparities
8. Implement strategies and interventions
9. Begin to see transformation in its public health practice in addressing infant mortality in the U.S. born African American population

## Key Activities

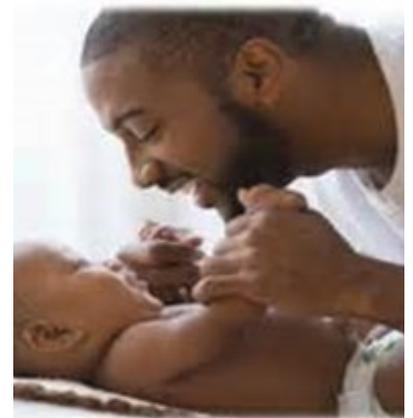
- Partnership development to strengthen key conditions for health
- Planning meetings to identify needs and priorities and to develop a shared vision
- Community co-learning sessions on health equity, social justice
- Community capacity development to increase social connections and increase awareness and knowledge of infant mortality disparities and initiatives and how to work across sectors in order to achieve policy and systems changes
- Evaluation activities to determine progress made in the areas of knowledge gain, skill development, partnership development, and transformation in public health practice in addressing infant mortality

## Key Partners

- Community Voices and Solutions (CVAS) – the project’s advisory group
- MDH Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Section
- Minneapolis Healthy Start Community Action Network (CAN)
- Minnesota Association of Community Health Centers (MNACHC)

## Anticipated Products

- Health Disparity Profile 1 describing traditional birth outcomes and socio-demographic and environmental characteristics of mothers and their community, and Health Disparity Profile 2 examining policies, systems and environments that impact birth outcomes
- A health equity narrative for infant mortality in the U.S. born African American community in Hennepin County to expand the range of possible solutions to address disparities
- List of potential strategies and interventions based on a health equity approach to address the high rates of infant mortality disparities
- Prenatal screening tool that can be used to screen for socio-economic and environmental risk factors that impact birth outcomes



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