

## **Expanding Access to Women's Health Grant Program Applicants and Proposed Activity Summaries**

### Applicants

Fourteen States (AR, CO, HI, MA, ME, MS, NE, NH, NJ, NM, PA, VT, WA, and WI) and D.C. applied for and were awarded a grant under the Expanding Access to Women's Health Grant program.

### Proposed Activity Summaries

Listed below each State is the award amount and highlighted proposed activities.

#### **Arkansas (awarded \$614,000 for EHB and preventive services)**

Arkansas will assess the financial impact of expanding health coverage to include midwives, doulas, community health workers, and no-cost-share services to prevent severe maternal morbidity (SMM). In addition, the State will gather qualitative and quantitative data through community-based focus groups and informational interviews with family and maternal health practitioners. These data gathering activities will provide valuable insights into the experiences and perceptions of women in low-income communities and help identify gaps in the current system to inform policy decisions and improve consumer outreach. The State will also implement a comprehensive educational campaign to inform women of childbearing age about available medical coverage and where to find appropriate providers.

#### **Colorado (awarded \$625,673 for EHB and preventive services)**

Colorado will enhance its review of preventive services coverage in annual issuer filings by assessing the data that issuers currently submit to identify gaps or deficiencies; developing tools to improve and automate data collection, review processes, and analyses; and developing consumer-friendly mechanisms to communicate plan-specific preventive services coverage. The State will also collect and analyze data to identify instances and patterns of non-compliance that will inform enforcement actions. Colorado will also identify barriers to accessing reproductive care associated with issuer networks and provide policy solutions.

#### **District of Columbia (awarded \$609,467 for EHB)**

The District of Columbia intends to hire consultants to develop and implement the administrative requirements for newly mandated coverage of infertility treatment services; improve the benefit design of standard plans to reduce financial burdens, increase utilization, and narrow disparities in reproductive and maternal health; and enhance consumer understanding of essential health benefits and preventive services through consumer testing and research.

#### **Hawaii (awarded \$610,936 for EHB and preventive services)**

Hawaii will perform an actuarial analysis to assess and update the State's current EHB benchmark plan's coverage for reproductive and maternal health. The State will also conduct a provider network adequacy analysis to evaluate access to the required preventive health services offered by issuers in the individual, small group, and large group markets.

#### **Maine (awarded \$595,297 for preventive services)**

To increase awareness and utilization of reproductive and maternal health coverage, Maine will launch a targeted outreach and education campaign. The campaign will focus on the Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) populations and low socio-income individuals, ensuring they have the information and resources to make informed healthcare choices. Also, an Outreach Coordinator will identify key

stakeholders, convene multiple workshops, and expand outreach efforts related to reproductive and maternal health benefits.

**Massachusetts (awarded \$627,854 for preventive services)**

To boost utilization of preventive healthcare services, Massachusetts will launch a statewide outreach campaign to raise awareness among women. Improving awareness is crucial, as increased knowledge often translates to greater use of available services. Additionally, the State will commission actuarial consultants to conduct a comparative analysis of other States and markets, with the goal of identifying innovative product designs that could further expand women's access to reproductive and maternal healthcare.

**Mississippi (awarded \$611,819 for EHB and preventive services)**

Mississippi will work with experts to examine the availability of women's health benefits in its EHB benchmark plans. The State also plans to conduct "market conduct examinations," which are audits to confirm insurers are delivering the required preventive health services and following applicable regulations, and will use additional funds to develop educational materials, seminars, and workshops related to women's health.

**Nebraska (awarded \$611,990 for EHB and preventive services)**

Nebraska will research and compare its own EHB benchmark plan with those of other States. The goal is to analyze the benefits provided for women's preventive services and pregnancy-related coverage. The State will also conduct extensive outreach and education to inform new and expectant parents about available benefits. Additionally, Nebraska will collect consumer complaint data to monitor any patterns of denied claims or access issues that may be impeding women's access to healthcare. Additionally, the State will track external reviews of denied claims to identify any patterns of overturned denials for women's healthcare services.

**New Hampshire (awarded \$610,871 for EHB and preventive services)**

New Hampshire will analyze the State's current EHB benchmark plan's coverage of women's health services, as well as the costs associated with expanding coverage. New Hampshire plans to conduct surveys, interviews, or focus groups to gauge women's knowledge and satisfaction with the current EHB benchmark coverage for women's health services. Based on this assessment, a consultant will recommend changes to the EHB benchmark plan's coverage for women's health services. Additionally, a report will be developed on the current state of access to women's health services in the State, identifying existing barriers and ways to improve access. Tools will be developed to enhance regulatory oversight of insurers' coverage for women's health services. Also, New Hampshire will launch an outreach and education campaign to support and improve access to women's health services, including developing educational materials, podcasts, social media content, and a women's health dashboard on the State's website.

**New Jersey (awarded \$624,150 for EHB)**

New Jersey plans to hire an actuarial firm to explore innovative approaches to expand comprehensive health coverage for maternal and reproductive healthcare services in the State's EHB package. New Jersey will update standard policy forms for individual and small group plans to ensure policyholders have access to comprehensive coverage for maternal and reproductive healthcare. New Jersey aims to explore various avenues to expand healthcare coverage as broadly and inclusively as possible. Also, New Jersey plans to identify and eliminate barriers to accessing care and services, as well as develop initiatives to reduce disparities in healthcare access and outcomes.

**New Mexico (awarded \$614,292 for EHB and preventive services)**

New Mexico will collect and analyze data to examine the cost of broadening access and coverage of reproductive healthcare and family services in the State. New Mexico will also develop outreach campaigns to educate women on the family services and reproductive healthcare coverage options that are available to them in New Mexico.

**Pennsylvania (awarded \$635,352 for preventive services)**

Pennsylvania will launch a multifaceted campaign focused on awareness and education about the importance of preventive care, including contraception. The Commonwealth will also enhance benefit reviews and issuer education to reduce coverage barriers and improve compliance with pre-selected federal market reforms.

**Vermont (awarded \$248,641 for EHB and preventive services)**

Vermont will assess the existing EHB benchmark plan's coverage of reproductive and maternal health services to determine if a broader scope of benefits for reproductive and maternal health coverage and services should be available in Vermont. Vermont will also develop a contraceptive coverage awareness campaign to educate consumers on their rights regarding State and Federal laws regarding health plan coverage of contraceptives.

**Washington (awarded \$620,000 for preventive services)**

To increase consumer access to contraceptive services and maternal healthcare services, Washington will develop a standardized administrative process for use by all issuers for claims submission and payment for contraceptives and selective maternal healthcare services. Additionally, Washington will use claims data from the Washington State All Payer Claims Database to analyze current access to, and utilization of, contraceptive services and preventive maternal healthcare services in Washington, and will contract with a market conduct consultant to pursue market conduct activities related to reproductive and maternal healthcare services. Also, Washington will use grant funds to improve consumer awareness of the covered reproductive and maternal healthcare services that are available to them, and how to access those services.

**Wisconsin (awarded \$495,000 for preventive services)**

Wisconsin will develop consumer-directed media outreach to increase consumer awareness of their rights regarding contraceptive coverage under section 2713 of the PHS Act. Wisconsin will also conduct a survey to gain insight into consumers' experiences accessing contraceptive coverage. Also, Wisconsin will conduct data calls to determine individual and group issuers compliance with the contraceptive care coverage requirements under section 2713 of the PHS Act and identify any issuer practices that may be creating unnecessary barriers to contraceptive care access.