



HFS

Illinois Department of
Healthcare and Family Services



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Pritzker Administration announces Illinois' selection to participate in new federal initiative to improve maternal health

The new Transforming Maternal Health Model will provide \$17 million to help Illinois Medicaid improve maternal health care

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Jan. 6, 2024

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Today, the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) announced it has been chosen by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to participate in the new Transforming Maternal Health ([TMaH](#)) Model, which seeks to improve maternal health outcomes by implementing a more whole-person approach to care. The federal program will provide \$17 million in critical funding over 10 years to help Illinois Medicaid and other awarded state Medicaid agencies develop and pilot a more comprehensive and integrated approach to addressing physical health, mental health and social needs throughout the pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum care continuum.

“We are honored to be chosen to participate in this new, innovative model, which will allow us to focus directly on improving maternal and child health outcomes in two underserved areas of the state,” **said Acting HFS Director Elizabeth M. Whitehorn.** “This support will go a long way to promoting equitable access to healthcare for families at a very critical time – during pregnancy, through childbirth and during the postpartum period.”

“The Illinois Department of Public Health is excited to support HFS as they participate in this new federal TMaH model,” **said IDPH Director Dr. Sameer Vohra.** “Addressing maternal and child health disparities is a significant priority for IDPH as we advance our Healthy Illinois 2028: State Health Improvement Plan. This latest effort by HFS to

improve maternal health is another example of Illinois finding innovative solutions to improving the physical, mental and social care of our residents.”

Most of the resources awarded to Illinois will be invested in provider infrastructure. This support will also enable states to develop a value-based alternative payment model for maternity care services which will improve quality and health outcomes and promote the long-term sustainability of services.

The United States has disproportionately high rates of adverse pregnancy outcomes despite spending more per capita on maternal health care than any other nation. Medicaid enrollees, particularly those in historically underserved communities, often experience significant disparities in maternal health care and disproportionately poor outcomes for the birthing person and their newborn.

This initiative aims to reduce disparities in access and promote equitable care and is squarely aligned with the healthcare priorities of the Pritzker Administration. Currently, the Medicaid program covers nearly one in every two births in Illinois. The new TMaH Model builds on HFS’ and the larger Pritzker Administration’s commitment to birth equity by improving quality, outcomes, and whole-person care delivery for all pregnant and parenting people. This work will be piloted in the Aurora and Rockford communities, which both include a mix of rural, suburban, and urban populations with persistent disparities in maternal health and birth outcomes.

Through the TMaH Model, Illinois’ Medicaid program will gain valuable technical assistance and additional resources to invest with community-based providers to address existing gaps in maternal health care by increasing access to midwives, doulas, lactation consultants and perinatal Community Health Workers, improving prenatal care for chronic conditions like diabetes and hypertension, reducing complicated procedures like C-sections for low-risk birthing persons and reducing rates of postpartum depression and anxiety.

The model has a three-year pre-implementation period, during which states receive technical assistance to advance each of the model’s pillars, followed by a seven-year implementation period to execute the model. HFS will partner with providers and community-based organizations to implement this initiative.

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