

## Changes to Section 46.515

Our interest is in strengthening what the current statute indicates and change key provisions to make Wisconsin better situated to receive any federal home visiting funds that may be available. The following items describe changes to the current statute:

- 1) Delete language associated with rural/urban populations and references to Milwaukee County to make future expansion of family foundations and implementing federal home visiting legislation easier. Two examples follow, but there are others in the bill.

Eg: (6) Criteria for awarding grants...(a) ..., other than renewal application submitted by a county, ~~other than a county with a population of 500,000 or more...~~

(c) Case management benefit... The applicant, ~~other than a county with a population of 500,000 or more~~, states in the grant...

- 2) Strengthen the language related to the current relationship with the technical assistance provider; see item (8). The University of Wisconsin Extension has developed core training around home visiting that encompasses best practice and critical elements concepts. This training is non-model specific and is inclusive of the following items: a) basic skills training, b) uniform administration of screening and assessment tools, c) in-depth training on issues and challenges families face, and 4) training for program managers and supervisors to develop their skills in supervision and hiring. In addition the University of Wisconsin Extension provides training and coordination for technical assistance around data entry for SPHERE.
- 3) Strengthen the language related to home visitation program evaluation; see item (7). The criteria listed, while important, are not the only criteria by which home visiting programs can be measured. In fact, the rather than prescribing the specific outcomes, we suggested outlining an evaluation process similar to that set up by the Home Visitation Outcomes Project. Programs are asked to collect data using very specific forms and enter that data into SPHERE. We don't necessarily want to legislate the specific forms to be used, but some language about using valid and reliable screening tools for which training is (currently) available through the UW-Extension would be preferable. Provide for the Department a means to require sites to develop/adopt an evaluation plan that includes a comprehensive outcome measurement system and demonstrates how outcomes will be tracked and measured in the areas of: parent knowledge (of parenting information), children's health, cognitive, language, social-emotion and physical development indicators; child maltreatment indicators; school readiness indicators and links to community services. Provide a means for annual evaluation that includes tracking of outcomes and the subsequent quality improvement efforts based on their findings.

- 4) Change the allocation from the percent of Medicaid births for successful applicants to a specific \$ amount (\$3600 in year one, \$3200 in year two and \$2800 in year three of infant's eligibility) per births funded by Medicaid from most recent year data available.
- 5) Change the language around eligibility. If an infant who is enrolled for 12 consecutive months is found to no longer be eligible for WI Medicaid, the program can continue to provide the full complement of services until the child's third birthday.
- 6) Require each site to have a 25% local match requirement which helps to promote local community buy in and builds a proactive way for programs to look at sustainability.

We suggest adding the following point to the current statute:

- 1) Programs provided state funds will integrate the twelve nationally recognized critical elements of successful home visiting programs developed by Deb Daro of Chapin Hall
- 2) Programs must use core competencies for their home visiting staff. Core competencies were developed by the Wisconsin Children's Trust Fund for staff working in the fields of home visiting, parent education and family support, child care and early care and education, and assist both programs and their staff to be effective in their roles regardless of their educational training or attainment.
- 3) Include language that provides the department a mechanism to assess the scope, quality and capacity of home visiting programs to identify gaps in service, and facilitate communication and collaboration of existing programs to address the gaps in services to ensure families are getting the most appropriate services to meet their needs. This language is part of the Education Begins at Home Act and will help to position Wisconsin for receipt of funds in the future.
- 4) The Department (whatever the current budget defines as the oversight body for the current family foundations programs) will be responsible for extended monitoring of the core competencies, evaluation and contract monitoring, which will include a peer review system of both eligible applicants, but also a peer review process provided every 3-4 years as a way to keep programs accountable for quality programming, adherence to the 12 critical elements and best practice standards. This item should include a fiscal note as it requires staff time and investment in this process.