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To: Oregon Hospital Administrators

From: Oregon Health Authority, Family Connects Oregon

RE: Family Connects Oregon Hospital Recruitment

Oregon has the unprecedented opportunity to connect every family with a newborn to a healthier future. We need your help to make it a reality.

In 2019, with the passage of Senate Bill 526, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) was tasked with creating a program in which every family with a newborn is offered one to three Registered Nurse (RN) home visits. In 2021, utilizing the Family Connects evidence-based model, Family Connects Oregon launched in eight counties with statewide expansion planned over time.

We ask that you partner with local Family Connects Oregon providers to establish a hospital recruitment strategy so that every family is offered the service shortly after birth.

Family Connects Outcomes

Evidence shows that a safe and healthy environment during childhood forms the foundation for a lifetime of physical and mental well-being and healthy relationships. Family Connects demonstrated the following clinical and return on investment outcomes in two clinical trials:

- Birthing parents were 28% less likely to report possible clinical anxiety at infant age 6 months.
- Birthing parents reported more positive parenting behaviors and were more responsive to their baby at age 6 months.
- Total child emergency room visits and hospital overnights were reduced by 50% through age 12 months and 37% through age 2 years.

<https://familyconnects.org/impact-evidence/the-evidence/>

Family Connects Oregon is a brief but powerful touchpoint as families integrate a newborn into their lives. RNs visit a family approximately three weeks after birth with up to two follow up visits in the weeks after. Nurses assess caregiver and infant physical health, provide guidance on feeding, growth, crying and safety, conduct perinatal depression, substance use and intimate partner violence screenings, and promote strong connection back to the medical home.

Raise Up Oregon, Oregon's early childhood comprehensive plan endorsed by six state agencies, calls for implementation of Family Connects Oregon in every community. By working with families to identify a family's physical, social and emotional needs, Family Connects nurses are uniquely poised to **link families to health and community services** including all other home visiting programs.

Hospital Partnership is Vital

OHA's call to action is that all families with newborns will be offered services and at least 60% will complete a visit. Implementation from around the country has shown hospital-based recruitment to be foundational in achieving this goal. Family Connects Oregon simply cannot reach every family without your partnership.

We strongly urge that as local Family Connects Oregon sites reach out, hospitals partner with them to develop or revise hospital-based recruitment strategies to be:

- **Universal:** As mandated in Senate Bill 526, all families are offered a Family Connects Oregon visit.
- **Family-centered:** Family Connects Oregon is designed as a brief touch point with the goal of connecting families to other services including home visiting programs. This reduces disruptions by eliminating the need for multiple home visiting programs to recruit individually at hospital bedside.
- **Comprehensive:** As envisioned by Senate Bill 526, Family Connects Oregon Registered Nurses consider the physical, social, and emotional needs of the family. This allows for meaningful connection to resources that best fit a family's comprehensive and unique needs.

Please reach out to the OHA team at Oregon.UOHV@odhsoha.oregon.gov with any questions or to schedule a meeting to learn more about Family Connects Oregon.

A listing of local Family Connects Oregon sites is found at familyconnectsoregon.org.

Sincerely,



Dr. Dean Sidelinger, M.D.
Health Officer and State Epidemiologist



Dr. Benjamin Hoffman, M.D.
Medical Director, Family Connects Oregon