

## Florida Healthy Start's Concerns with the Senate Budget Proposal (Rev. 3-30-21)

Healthy Start has significant concerns with the Senate proposed \$41 million budget reduction and associated conforming bill language (SPB 2518 lines 514-541) that changes /moves the Healthy Start contract with AHCA to a system of subcontracts with each of the health plans. Concerns include:

1. There was a specific reason why the Florida Legislature chose to carve out Healthy Start from the original Medicaid managed care reform legislation in 2011. Healthy Start is meant to be a universal program in Florida available for all pregnant women regardless of insurance type. Families can change or lose insurance and still have continuity of care in the program.
2. Placing Healthy Start services under the health plans would effectively dismantle the current universal system of care and safety net for vulnerable pregnant women and infants that was established by the Legislature and has successfully been in place for nearly 30 years.
3. Health plans vary what they do. If the changes are enacted, vital pre-natal care for pregnant women will no longer be uniform across the state and will be based upon the health plan and where the pregnant mom lives.
4. Florida would lose coordinated intake and referral that prevents duplication of home visiting programs in Florida and is recognized nationally as a best practice. This would also jeopardize the universal risk screening infrastructure.
5. Home visiting programs in other states that contract with health plans report the plans do not reimburse enough to cover needed infrastructure costs. Additional funding from the state legislatures and private sector is needed.
6. Over the years, Healthy Start has strategically invested in creating a universal data system for case management, reports, and Medicaid claims. If the proposed shift in structure were enacted, all of the service and billing infrastructure would be impacted. It would be a significant financial burden to re-program for different billing amounts and different service codes that would vary by health plan and region.

### Healthy Start Services Complement but Do Not Duplicate Health Plans

Healthy Start and the health plans have clear lanes of services that are specified in current legislation. Contract language may need to be updated to provide better clarity of legislative intent.

- **Coordinated Intake and Referral** is recognized nationally as a best practice to coordinate and not duplicate home visiting services in the community.
- **Healthy Start Prenatal, Infant, and Interconception Home Visiting** is different from health plan services as we provide the "active boots on the ground". Home visiting services are intensive, long-term relationships that are focused on family support and counseling on parenting, health education, social determinants of health, evidence-based screenings, and risk appropriate care coordination. Health plans offer home health, shorter term visits focused more on medical concerns that complement and not duplicate Healthy Start.
- **Coordination with health plans** includes weekly/monthly client services data sharing, monthly shared interdisciplinary case team calls, and a new health plan portal to the Healthy Start data system to view enrollee records.

### Call to Action

- Please contact the members of the Senate and ask them to maintain the Healthy Start/MomCare funding and not support the \$41 million cut.
- Healthy Start works closely with the health plans to ensure no duplication of services and to identify and support pregnant moms with the services they need.
- The House includes additional funding needed for Healthy Start to offset projected shortfall in the services provided to pregnant moms and families with young children 0-3 years.