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Innovative Breastfeeding Partnership Begins Work

CCPD Grants Program Commits Three Years of Funding to ABC Project

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As National Breastfeeding Month kicks off, exciting new work is happening in Colorado to support a public health practice with numerous benefits for mothers, babies and families.

The Colorado Health Institute (CHI) is joining with four metro-area public health agencies to help communities become more breastfeeding friendly. CHI will provide evaluation and project management for the duration of the grant.

The four public health partners, which represent six counties, will use their networks and expertise to provide breastfeeding friendly assessments of businesses, medical offices and child care centers; expand continuity-of-care offerings for breastfeeding support; and offer technical assistance to stakeholders and coalitions working in counties across the state.

The project, called Advancing Breastfeeding in Colorado (ABC), is supported by a three-year commitment from the state's Cancer, Cardiovascular and Chronic Pulmonary Disease (CCPD) Grants Program. Work began on July 1. The team includes Boulder County Public Health, Denver Public Health, Jefferson County Public Health and Tri-County Health Department (representing Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas counties), in addition to CHI.

While the agencies are centered in the Denver metro area, their work will benefit the entire state. ABC will partner with local and regional groups to create a seamless system of breastfeeding support in Colorado that features breastfeeding friendly worksites, professionals and resources that are both effective and culturally responsive.

Through bringing together experts and coordinating activities and goals, the project aims to improve health, reduce disparities, and help families — especially those with less access to breastfeeding resources and assistance at their jobs and in their communities.



“A significant piece of this project is the wide range of technical assistance offerings, including seed money and coaching, for non-metro partners working to improve breastfeeding rates in ways that make sense for their communities,” said Linda Kopecky, Breastfeeding Friendly Environments Project Coordinator at Boulder County Public Health, the technical assistance lead on the project. “What works in Jefferson County may not work in Baca. Our goal is to support our partners in developing their own models.”

The project will build on the activities and success of existing groups across the state, such as the Colorado Breastfeeding Coalition.

“Breastfeeding is an established, evidence-based health practice that is also a challenge for many across Colorado. We are pleased to assist our metro public health partners in developing a thoughtful, coordinated and practical approach that will support all mothers and families,” said Allie Morgan, ABC’s project manager.

The CCPD Grants Program is funded through tobacco tax revenue collected under Amendment 35, which was approved by Colorado voters in 2004. Grants are awarded for three-year funding cycles. One of CCPD’s current focus areas is “policy and environmental change” — a topic that features breastfeeding support and promotion as a key strategy.