

TOP 10 REASONS TO ESTABLISH MEDICAID & TITLE V PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILY-TO-FAMILY HEALTH INFORMATION CENTERS

As Title V and Medicaid agencies work to eliminate health disparities for children and youth with special health care needs and their families and promote equity and well-being, partnership with youth and families must be cornerstone to such efforts. Collaborations with family-led organizations are an excellent means of breaking down silos, working across systems and centering meaningful family partnership in all equity work for CYSHCN.

There is a Family-to-Family Health Information Center (F2Fs) in every state, DC, 5 territories, and 3 tribal nations. Funded by MCHB, these family-led organizations are staffed by highly skilled professional families with lived experience. F2F staff support families and assist providers, state and federal agencies, legislators, and other stakeholders to better understand and address the needs of CYSHCN. Find the F2F in your state or territory.

Family Voices and F2Fs can help Medicaid and Title V programs by:

- 1. Providing important data** F2Fs track data about the families with whom they connect for systems navigation and support services, including problems encountered with Title V, Medicaid/CHIP, and other state agency services. F2Fs can share data to identify areas where family partnerships can help improve services and eliminate disparities.
- 2. Creating meaningful opportunities for family partnership** F2Fs can identify and work collaboratively with state agencies to develop opportunities to integrate families as colleagues co-creating policies and practices and as valued members of project teams.
- 3. Supporting family partners** F2Fs mentor families for partnership roles so they can effectively connect their lived experiences to policy issues and drive meaningful improvements in systems of care.
- 4. Identifying family partners** F2Fs use their connections with families and community-based organizations to identify and recruit diverse families to partner in systems change and quality improvement.
- 5. Providing collaboration, leadership and workforce development** F2Fs provide inter-professional, including families, Medicaid and Title V staff, training and skill-building workshops to foster and ensure successful collaborations between all partners.
- 6. Facilitating language access** Communication is key in all public health and health care delivery, but too often information is not accessible. Barriers to language access, such as lack of plain language or interpreters, create disparities and inequities at the individual level. Similar barriers exist at the systems level that disrupt collaboration, entrench power structures and inhibit meaningful partnership. F2Fs are skilled facilitators of communication and language access.

7. Disseminating Information The F2F network within each state is vast and offers a unique dissemination opportunity to share critical public health information directly with diverse families. Additionally, F2Fs leverage partnerships across their entire state to disseminate needs assessments, recruit diverse families for focus groups, key informant interviews, and other opportunities.

8. Spreading innovation Each F2F is part of a vibrant national network of family-led organizations that actively shares strategies and best practices around every aspect of partnership between families, Medicaid, Title V and clinical providers. Collaborating with an F2F in your state plugs you into the knowledge of a family-led network of innovation.

9. Ensuring the family voice Family Voices provides technical assistance to identify opportunities, facilitate culture change, build capacity and activate partnership between youth, families, providers and public health partners.

10. Assessing family partnership Use the Family Engagement in Systems Assessment Tools to assess, improve, and plan family-centered policies, programs and services. This tool is concrete yet flexible as it molds to meet the needs of its users; whether this is the first time partnering with an F2F or whether it is part of an effort to deepen aspects of existing projects or initiatives involving families and F2Fs as partners. Family Voices can offer coaching in where to begin and how to use the tools.