



Connecticut Department of Public Health
Testimony Presented Before the Appropriations and
Public Health Committees

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The Preventive Health and Health Services and the Maternal and Child Health Services
Block Grants

Good afternoon, my name is Janet Brancifort and I am Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Public Health. I am here to present the Department's proposed Federal Fiscal Year 2017 Allocation Plans for the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant and the Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant.

The Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant (PHHSBG) was established by Congress in 1981 to provide funding to address each state's unique public health needs in innovative and locally defined ways. This program gives grantees the flexibility to use funds to respond rapidly to emerging health issues and to fill funding gaps in programs that deal with the leading causes of death and disability. The criterion for use of the PHHSBG is that funds be utilized to support initiatives consistent with achieving *Healthy People Objectives*. These national, science-based objectives span ten years with the overall goal of improving the health of all Americans.

The proposed FFY 2017 funding estimate for Connecticut is based on the FFY 2016 funding level of \$2,250,001. The estimated FFY 2017 allocation will include a basic award of \$2,170,087, in addition to a mandated Sex Offense Set-Aside of \$79,914 intended to provide rape crisis services to rape victims. The Department has a contingency plan in place should an increase or reduction in funding occur. If the projected amount were to change, the Department would present options to the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant Advisory Committee and modify allocations based on Committee recommendations. Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant funds support work in asthma, cancer, cardiovascular disease, childhood lead poisoning, diabetes, smoking cessation, injury prevention, youth violence, suicide prevention, and rape crisis programs. The funds also provide support for the State's emergency medical services, Connecticut's public health surveillance and evaluation efforts, and national and local public health accreditation initiatives.

Overall, this Block Grant supports an array of public health initiatives at both the state and local levels. Health priorities and program categories for FFY 2017 remain the same as those approved in FFY 2016, with no exceptions.

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In regard to the Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant (MCHBG) Allocation Plan, the MCHSBG promotes the development of service systems in states to meet critical challenges in:

- reducing infant mortality;
- providing and ensuring access to comprehensive care for women;
- promoting the health of children by providing preventive and primary care services;
- increasing the number of children who receive health assessments and treatment services; and
- providing family centered, community based, and coordinated services for children and youth with special health needs (CYSHCN).

Per federal requirements, at least 30 percent of funds must be used for prevention and primary care services, and at least 30 percent must be used for children and youth with special health needs. There are a number of other administrative requirements that are referenced in the Allocation Plan. The Department is in compliance with all Block Grant requirements.

A variety of services are provided with MCHBG funds that meet the objectives as outlined in the Allocation Plan. These include case management services for pregnant women, MCH information and referral services (2-1-1 Infoline), family planning, oral health, school-based primary and behavioral health, infant health and well-being, newborn screening, and medical homes for children and youth with special health care needs.

The Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant has a proposed Federal Fiscal Year 2017 budget of \$4,613,166. The proposed Allocation Plan incorporates precautionary measures in the event that the actual Federal Fiscal Year 2017 award amount is decreased to less than this amount. Should it be necessary, the Department will review the criticality and performance of the various programs. Within the proposed plan, all programmatic allocations are level funded. The plan reallocates funding for one FTE position from the Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs category to the Maternal Child Health category utilizing existing agency staff. The reallocation provides additional epidemiological support for all MCH programs; additional staff training to implement changes associated with the MCH Block Grant Transformation; and activities to assist the state in meeting new National Performance Measures which include state specific Evidence-Based Strategy Measures.

The final Notice of Grant Award for Federal Fiscal Year 2016 was not received until after the allocation plan for 2017 had been submitted. The final award for Federal Fiscal Year 2016 was for \$4,619,707; this is \$6,541 more than projected within the 2016 allocation plan. The additional \$6,541 will support a State Performance Measure to improve perinatal health.

Thank you and I appreciate your consideration of these Block Grant Allocation Plans. If you have any questions, agency staff and I will be happy to answer them.

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