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Lessons Learned from Exceptional Florida Local Health Departments in Maternal and Child Health
Poster Presentation
Annual Educational Conference of the Florida Public Health Association.
Orlando, FL
August 19-20, 2015
Local health departments (LHDs) are under increasing pressure to improve performance with limited resources. While research has found that financial resources may be associated with better health outcomes, there are some LHDs that maintain exceptional performance, even with limited budgets.

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METHODS

Using data from the Public Health Activities and Services Tracking (PHAST) database as a resource for identifying **Positive Deviant LHDs** in MCH outcomes in terms of 4 areas:
- Teen Births
- Late or No Prenatal Care
- Infant Mortality
- Percent of Low Weight Births

3 FOCUS AREAS WERE EXAMINED

- Assessment & Policy Development
- Research & Evaluation
- Regulatory Oversight

Primary data were collected through hour-long phone interviews with staff in 18 out of 24 (75%) Florida LHDs:
- 12 Metro (67%)
- 1 Micro (5%)
- 5 Rural (28%)

RESULTS

**Themes**

Positive Deviant LHDs focus on assuring their communities have access to needed services, even when that means changing their roles and responsibilities.

Importance of Community Partnerships:
- Community Based Organizations
- Schools
- Internal LHD Departments

Importance of Healthy Start Coalitions in Improving MCH Outcomes

Importance of Clearly Defined Goals:
- Referral Services
- Population Based
- Data-Defined Outcomes

**Challenges**

Similar challenges across the LHDs interviewed included funding, the shift to Medicaid Managed Care and staff turnover.

CONCLUSIONS

Our findings offer insight into activities LHDs can undertake—implementing partnerships and identifying evidence-based goals—utilizing the resources they currently have to improve MCH outcomes. **Positive Deviant LHDs** have maintained their assurance role by strengthening partnerships and identifying goals based on community health outcome data.