



WHY AN INITIATIVE ON PRECONCEPTION HEALTH?

FACTS ABOUT PRECONCEPTION HEALTH

- Despite improvements in access to early prenatal care and medical breakthroughs, maternal and infant positive pregnancy outcomes have slowed significantly nationwide.
- More women are postponing pregnancy until later in life and/or beginning their pregnancies with risks proven to contribute to adverse pregnancy outcomes, e.g., high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity.
- The most critical periods of fetal development occur in the earliest weeks following conception, before many women are aware they are pregnant.
- Prenatal care begins too late to prevent many adverse maternal and infant health outcomes.
- Several prenatal interventions are more effective if implemented before conception (e.g., taking folic acid).
- Addressing risk factors, such as alcohol and tobacco use, immunizations, STIs, diabetes and obesity, offers great potential for improving birth outcomes and women's health.

BACKGROUND

The need for a public health action agenda for preconception health emerged as a top priority from Oregon's Maternal and Child Health (MCH) leadership retreat in November 2007. Since then, state and local public health MCH and women's health leaders have developed a preconception health action plan and launched a social marketing campaign in Southern Oregon.

- **Definition of preconception health:** Beginning a pregnancy in a state of optimal physical, emotional and social well-being.

OREGON'S PRECONCEPTION HEALTH INITIATIVE

- **Vision:** Preconception health is the norm for Oregon women of reproductive age.
- **Mission:** Promote preconception health with women planning a pregnancy within the next 12 months.

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ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

CONSUMER AWARENESS

- Social marketing messages developed to promote and support protective factors for Latina women to improve birth outcomes.
- Educational materials developed and distributed to prevent binge drinking among sexually active college age women.

PREVENTIVE VISITS AND PROVIDER EDUCATION

- Preconception Health Conference: A Lifespan Approach to Reproductive Health held April 2009 and planning for second annual conference (Medford, May 21, 2010).
- Partnered on Nutrition and the Womb preconception health conference, October 2008.
- Received Health Resources and Services Administration funding to conduct a Social Marketing Campaign to support protective factors for Latina women and educate health care providers.

PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAMS AND STRATEGIES

- Oregon's Public Health Action Plan for Preconception Health developed.
- Partnership initiated to coordinate state agency preconception health work.
- Applied and selected by Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP) as one of six states to participate in an Action Learning Collaborative to address preconception health of adolescents.
- WowDHEC (Women with Disabilities Health Equity Coalition), OHSU Center for Women's Health, National Youth Leadership Network and Oregon Public Health Division are developing health recommendations for young adults with disabilities.

For more information, or to get involved please contact:

JULIE MCFARLANE
Oregon Public Health Division:
Office of Family Health
Julie.M.McFarlane@state.or.us
Phone: 971-673-0365

DONNA KIPP
Multnomah County Health Department
Donna.J.Kipp@co.multnomah.or.us
Phone: 503-988-3366 x 22249

Websites:

Oregon Public Health Division's Preconception Health Initiative
www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/pch/index.shtml

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/preconception



OREGON'S PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVE FOR PRECONCEPTION HEALTH:

Oregon's preconception health action plan

A women's health collaboration of Oregon's state and local public health agencies



LEAD ORGANIZATIONS:

Oregon Public Health Division, Office of Family Health,
Women's and Reproductive Health Section and
Maternal and Child Health Section

Conference of Local Health
Officials, Maternal and Child Health Committee



OVERVIEW OF OREGON'S PRECONCEPTION HEALTH ACTION PLAN

CDC RECOMMENDATIONS

YEAR **1**

YEAR **2**

YEAR **3**

YEAR **4**

Consumer awareness

Increase public awareness of the importance of preconception health behaviors and preconception care services by using information and tools that are age-appropriate and consider health literacy and cultural/linguistic contexts.

Conduct a social marketing campaign to develop messages for promoting preconception health knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors among men and women of childbearing age. (State and local)

Assess opportunities to integrate preconception health messages into existing outreach activities.

Preventive visits

As a part of primary care visits, provide risk assessment and educational and health promotion counseling to all women of childbearing age to reduce reproductive risks and improve pregnancy outcomes.

Build on and reframe existing professional guidelines to develop recommendations specific for preconception health. (State and local)

Raise health provider awareness and importance of preconception health for all women who are planning a pregnancy within the next 12 months. (State and local)

Develop a plan for sustainability. (State)

Public health programs and strategies

Integrate components of preconception health into existing local public health and related programs, including emphasis on interconception and interventions for women with previous adverse outcomes.

Use task forces, coalitions, or committees to identify gaps and opportunities for promotion of preconception health recommendations and strategies at the state and local level. (State and local)

Develop and support public health practice collaborative groups to promote shared learning and dissemination of approaches for increasing preconception health.

Include content related to preconception care in educational curricula of schools of public health and other training facilities for public health professionals. (State and local)

Use federal and state agency support to implement integrated preconception and interconception health practices in clinics and programs. (State and local)

Monitoring improvement

Maximize public health surveillance and related research mechanisms to monitor preconception health.

Utilize existing surveillance techniques to extract preconception care data. (State)

Monitor State and County program data. (State and local)

Incorporate GIS Mapping into data and analysis. (State)

Develop additional surveillance tools to enrich data capture. (State and local)