

Health Support for Pregnant Mothers and Newborns

General Policy/Approach:

Pregnant Mothers:

Early Head Start works closely with pregnant mothers to secure comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care. With each expectant mother enrolled in EHS, a plan is developed collaboratively to ensure completion of appropriate risk assessments (nutritional screening, PHQ9 mental health screening, etc.), prenatal medical and dental examinations, and interventions as needed or required in anticipation of the child's birth (as well as subsequent to childbirth). Home Based Home Visitors work with expectant mothers to develop a labor and delivery plan in anticipation of childbirth. In cases in which substance abuse or severe medical needs are present, home-based home visitors supply referrals and assistance in identifying a potentially successful source of treatment.

Home Based Home Visitors also provide educational resources to expectant mothers on a series of topics, which they then use to plan, including:

- Fetal development (including the risks of smoking and alcohol)
- Labor and delivery
- Postpartum recovery (and the potential for postpartum depression)
- Breastfeeding
- Community resources relevant to pregnant mothers

Newborn:

When a pregnant woman enrolled in the program gives birth, the newborn is automatically enrolled in EHS. Within two weeks of the infant's birth, a Newborn Health Home Visit is scheduled to ensure the well-being of both the mother and the child. Visit will be completed within the child's first month of life.

Head Start Program Performance Standards:

1302.80 – Enrolled pregnant women

Procedure:

Newborn Health Home Visit

1. Home Based Home Visitor contacts Health Services as soon as possible after the child is born.
2. In conjunction with the Home-Based Home Visitor and Family, Health Services staff will schedule the home visit to meet the two-week timeframe; this visit can occur in the hospital or home.
3. Following the home visit, Health staff will debrief with Health Manager and any concerns will be followed up on.
4. Information derived from the home visit will be entered into the database and forms will be filed in the appropriate locations.

KEY DATES & CALENDAR TASK:

Task & Activities	Timeframe	Staff Responsible
Completion of pre-natal visits and dental exams	Ongoing as needed	Home Based Home Visitor, Health Services staff support
Educational information and materials provided to pregnant mothers in anticipation of labor, delivery, and caring for a newborn	Ongoing as per individual start dates	Home Based Home Visitor, Health Services and Education staff support
Home visit scheduled within two weeks of birth of child and completed within 1 month of birth		Health Services in collaboration with Home Based Home Visitor and family