

UNM HSC FOCUS Milagro Centers of Excellence – Legislative Proposal
Presented to
Behavioral Health Subcommittee
of the
Legislative Health and Human Services Committee
November 7, 2104

Overview: proposed appropriation of new funds for the provision of integrated, state of the art care to 400 additional pregnant women at risk due to substance use disorders and for their infants at risk for developmental delays through the expansion of existing FOCUS and Milagro services at UNM HSC, the development of a UNM HSC Center of Excellence to support training and technical assistance to other communities in the state, and the replication of the FOCUS-Milagro integrated care model in three new communities in the state in the first phase, and up to two additional sites by FY18.

Problem: increased numbers of pregnant women have substance use disorders across the state. Few communities have sufficient expertise and resources to provide comprehensive prenatal care and drug treatment with early identification of the pregnancy at risk. Pregnancies in opiate addicted women who are not in treatment are at high risk for fetal growth restriction and preterm birth. Outside of Albuquerque, New Mexico communities have minimal access to substance abuse programs directed towards pregnant women. Fewer communities have the capacity to manage an infant who needs treatment for Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome. After delivery many communities lack coordinated services to organize early intervention services that account for prenatal drug exposure, “ghosts in the nursery” as they affect the parents’ understanding of their young child, and prevent adverse childhood events. These considerations are paramount to address developmental risks from prenatal exposure and coordinate efforts with primary care.

Organizing philosophy: This effort seeks to promote and enhance early brain development starting in fetal life and continuing through age three. This is significant because of brain research that seems to demonstrate brain developmental capacity for:

1. response to parental language during pregnancy,
2. the sequential organization of the brain to achieve cortical predominance,
3. effects of exogenous drugs on the neuroreceptor systems critical to formation of memories and thus learning,
4. promotion of the health of the pregnant woman to support healthy fetal brain development,
5. learning organized around relationships starting at birth,
6. the essential emotional communication required for infant emotional regulation underlying the capacity to learn,
7. the severe impact of adverse childhood experiences creating toxic stresses that disturb regulation and learning,
8. the necessity of enhancing the health of the parent while addressing health needs of the infant, and

9. the role of specific focused drug treatment for the parent to promote self-regulation and thus the emotional environment needed by the infant for regulation and learning.

How this could work: Funding directed to the HSC for approximately 3,500,000 for a 3 tier approach to build capacity and develop Centers of Excellence throughout NM;

Tier 1 – Develop a UNM HSC Center of Excellence to provide training and technical assistance in identified communities, and, increase UNM HSC capacity to provide direct services to increased numbers of pregnant women and infants via

- a. support of salaries and benefits for experienced, interdisciplinary UNM HSC faculty and staff to develop a cross departmental Center of Excellence training and technical assistance model.
- b. support of salaries and benefits for HSC faculty and staff to provide hands on training and technical assistance to initially three, and potentially five total, additional communities in the state in support of implementation of integrated care networks in said communities that replicate the FOCUS-Milagro integrated care model for women with substance use disorders, primarily opiate addictions, during pregnancy and after the birth of her child.
- c. support of staff and faculty salaries to support clinical time/services lost due to training and technical assistance activities provided other community sites by UNM HSC faculty clinicians and to expand current service delivery within the UNM HSC given the high volume of patients currently seeking Milagro and FOCUS services. (This would include service delivery to approximately 150 added pregnant women or infants within the UNM HSC system).
- d. Fiscal support of infrastructure needs, including travel, equipment, teleconferencing support, materials, and other logistical needs to support UNM HSC faculty and staff to provide local and remote capacity building, consultation, training and technical assistance to three (and ultimately five total) community sites/provider groups in order to establish FOCUS Centers of Excellence that would serve approximately 250 additional pregnant women or infants in their local communities, and
- e. fiscal support for activities related to the development and implementation of a community of practice model that links community provider networks within the three initially identified communities and the UNM HSC team, creating a consortium of FOCUS centers of excellence in the state by FY17 that can be added to as future sites are identified.

For the UNM HSC components listed above the bill would provide \$1.4 million of funding to support both expansion of clinical services for pregnant women and infants (150 new women/families) and the cost of developing and providing training, technical assistance and capacity building activities via a UNM Center of Excellence Training and Technical assistance program that supports other identified community sites to develop capacity and provider networks.

Tier 2: Three additional communities would be provided with an estimated \$635,000 (\$1.9 million total) initial “priming” monies to develop provider networks and local level Centers of Excellence. Funding for each new center would be reduced strategically over time as local community Centers of Excellence develop their provider networks, refine billing processes for services, establish community collaborations, develop their medical home model and optimize fee-for-service revenues. Some non-billable infrastructure and meeting costs would be continually supported in each community, but the overall dollar amount would be reduced over three years, freeing money to be used to support up to two additional communities beginning in FY18.

For each of the three communities identified in Tier 2, initial funding would support (please refer to attached proposed budget for more detail)

1. Salaries and benefits for:
 - a. Clinic Coordinators for each care center of excellence to coordinate medication assisted treatment for women during pregnancy and after the birth of the infant
 - b. Portion of salary and benefits for a core medical provider estimated at 0.4 FTE in each of the locations that will serve as a local Center of Excellence Medical Director
 - c. Mid-level behavioral health counselor to provide women specific, trauma informed treatment services
 - d. Community Support Workers and/or Social Workers to coordinate medical, treatment and community services for pregnant women and their existing children
 - e. Child development specialists and/or Early Childhood Home Visitors to offer supportive services for mother prenatally and/or for the infant dyad after the birth to support and to coordinate community and early intervention services – 2 per center (to be leveraged with existing community home visiting and early intervention funding)
 - f. Partial salary support for program managers to participate in meetings and program development in local communities

2. Other activities supported by funds for each of the three communities in Tier 2:
 - a. Team meetings weekly
 - b. Provider care management activities (included in FTE support)
 - c. Technical support for centers of excellence and training of providers, nurses, case managers, early intervention providers, and counselors provided by UNM HSC Center of Excellence Training Center faculty
 - d. Telehealth clinics and consultation provided by UNM HSC Training Center Faculty
 - e. Travel for home visits and car insurance
 - f. Laptop computers, cell phones, technology to support outreach
 - g. Travel and lodging of providers to come to the UNM HSC and work directly with FOCUS and Milagro faculty and staff for week-long training residencies
 - h. Additional training funds for local providers to develop expertise in evidence-based practice models relevant to the population (e.g. Trauma informed

behavioral health treatment; Infant Mental Health practice; gender specific Substance Abuse treatments, etc.)

- i. funds to support a subcontract developed with the Rand Corporation to provide state of the art program evaluation to inform practice and policy

Tier 3: Allocation of community Center of Excellence development funds to up to two additional communities starting in FY18. These funds will be made available by reduction of support for the three initial sites as they establish their programs and revenue streams for clinical activities. Activities and support for these two new sites would be commensurate with those outlined above for the three initial communities supported in Tier 2 as outlined above.