



*How Title V supports:*  
**Perinatal/Infant Health**

Promoting health and wellness is important throughout infancy, from birth through the first year of life. The Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant provides safety net direct, enabling, and population level services to pregnant people and infants across Pennsylvania during the perinatal period and throughout early childhood. **Title V funds support over 130,000 infants annually, approximately 98% of all infants in the state.** Beginning in 2021, infant health strategies worked to advance Priority 2, Priority 4, and Priority 6 of the Title V Action Plan.

**PRIORITY 4**

Improve the percent of children and youth with special health care needs who receive care in a well-functioning system

**PRIORITY 2**

Reduce rates of infant mortality (all causes), especially where there is inequity

**PRIORITY 6**

Strengthen Title V staff's capacity for data-driven and evidence-based decision making and program development

*Addressing priority health needs with evidence-based strategies*



**Breastfeeding Education and Support**

Title V supports Pennsylvania's Keystone 10 Initiative in birthing facilities statewide. This voluntary initiative focuses on facility adoption and implementation of the 10 evidence-based steps to successful breastfeeding. Additionally, community-based organizations in select counties with a breastfeeding rate below the statewide average and in areas with low rates of breastfeeding among African Americans receive Title V funds to provide breastfeeding education and outreach to help raise breastfeeding rates.

Title V funds also support the development and implementation of biannual breastfeeding collaborative meetings in regions throughout Pennsylvania. The collaborative meetings are designed to provide breastfeeding education and support, access to networking, and resources to local community-based organizations.



**Safe Sleep Practices and Support**

Title V supports a hospital-based safe sleep program that bundles multiple interventions, including nurse and caregiver education, to improve safe sleep practices. By the end of 2023, the hospital-based safe sleep program was fully implemented in 40% of birthing hospitals in the state. During 2023, caregivers of nearly 59,000 newborns received safe sleep education as part of this program.



**Newborn Screening**

Infants born in Pennsylvania receive a dried blood spot screen, a hearing screen, and a critical congenital heart defect screen to identify conditions that can cause serious illness or death if untreated. In 2021, the department's contracted laboratory, PerkinElmer Genetics, performed 135,557 initial dried blood spot screenings. The number of infants receiving a hearing screening in 2021 was slightly less at 131,750 and 131,983 newborns received a critical congenital heart defect screening. Early recognition and treatment of conditions identified through a newborn screen can lead to a better outcome for the infant.



**Healthy Baby Helpline**

Title V supports a helpline, 1-800-986-BABY (2229), which provides callers with information on finding a doctor, getting healthcare coverage, immunizations, tests for baby, and breastfeeding.



**Supporting Referral of Newborns with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS)**

Title V funds support review and analysis of neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) cases reported to the Newborn Screening Program to help identify birth hospitals that need to improve referrals to Early Intervention. Once birth hospitals needing support are identified, technical assistance is provided to improve rates of NAS case referral to Early Intervention.



**Reducing Disparity**

Title V funds support three Perinatal Period of Risk (PPOR) studies. PPOR, an analytic framework for studying racial disparities in fetal and infant mortality rates, is based on core principles of full community engagement and equity, and follows a six-stage, community-based planning process. Fetal and infant deaths are categorized into four periods of risk, based on birthweight and age at death and that correspond to specific factors associated with birth outcomes. PPOR determines the period(s) of risk with the most disparity in deaths to focus community efforts.

**The Department of Health's Bureau of Family Health is the Title V Administrator in Pennsylvania.**

For more information, e-mail [RA-DHPATITLEV@pa.gov](mailto:RA-DHPATITLEV@pa.gov) or visit our website:

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/Administrative/Pages/Title-V.aspx>