

# **Connecticut's System for the Healthy Development of Young Children Proposal for Design and Development of Comprehensive Health Services Component - Revised**

Submitted by Judith Meyers on behalf of the  
Healthy Child Development Workgroup<sup>1</sup> to the Early Childhood Education Cabinet

January 8, 2008

## Introduction

This proposal was originally submitted to the Early Childhood Cabinet at the November meeting. It was tabled until December because of questions of process that had not yet been determined. The proposal was taken up at the December meeting where it received the Cabinet's support. Some revisions to the original proposal have been made based on subsequent developments, and it is submitted again for a vote to confirm support for its funding.

## **I. Background**

The Healthy Child Development Workgroup presented to the ECE Cabinet, at its September meeting, a framework for a system of child health services that would support school readiness. The Framework has been shared with several state agencies and local collaboratives engaged in planning community systems to support child health, and has been incorporated into the Infant and Toddler Plan (First Words, First Steps). The framework portrays Connecticut's child health services and the relationship of such services to early child care and education and family support. It conceptualizes child health services as a series of three building blocks: universal services provided to all children and families to support optimal healthy development and early identification of developmental concerns; selective services available to all children and families and likely to be accessed by some to promote early intervention; and indicated services provided to those children that have identified difficulties and fulfill certain eligibility criteria. The importance of care coordination and the critical need for linkages within and across service sectors (child health, early care and education, and family support) are emphasized.

## **II. Proposed Project**

Purpose. Based on the Framework as a conceptual foundation, the Workgroup proposes to gather and analyze information that will inform the creation of a state plan for building an integrated, comprehensive child health system that aligns state and local efforts in Connecticut. One of the key strategies of the ECE Cabinet is to address child health, development and safety. One of the Cabinet's priorities is that: *All children covered by HUSKY receive regular well-child visits, an annual developmental assessment, and needed care and treatment.* The document, similar to the Investment Plan developed for *Ready by Five, Fine by Nine* but focusing on the child health system, will provide a blueprint for how this can be achieved. It will address the current capacity of the services system; gaps in current services, supports and

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linkages; the policy, data, and financing reforms needed; and a plan for building a more cost-effective and efficient system than we have now.

Goal. The resulting document will inform state and local policy and systems development that will benefit the health of children in the earliest years, maximizing their likelihood of being able to succeed in their first years of schooling. It will provide a roadmap for building a quality state and local primary care health system that will be positioned to not only serve young children, but to support families and early care and education providers as partners in achieving the best outcomes for children

Approach. The Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI) will administer the project. The Healthy Child Development Workgroup will provide oversight and guidance. Two communities who have developed Early Childhood Blueprints will be partners in this work. Hartford has already agreed to participate and we will seek another community partner. The firm of Holt, Wexler and Farnam has been engaged to assist with the development of the project, providing support in data collection and analysis and report preparation. Once we have a draft for discussion, we will invite a panel of national experts to a 1-2 day meeting to review and have input into our work. Individuals who have already expressed interest, and are familiar with Connecticut's efforts, include Neal Halfon, Ed Schor, Charlie Bruner, Carl Valentine, and Kay Johnson. Review by this national panel will bring visibility to our work and give us opportunities beyond Connecticut to garner support for local demonstrations as well as statewide reform.

Result. The project will result in a comprehensive framework and plan that will serve as a useful vehicle for reforming health services in collaboration with other early childhood systems in Connecticut at both the state and local levels. In addition to dissemination and associated advocacy for implementation of the plan to legislative and state agency personnel, we will ensure that other local communities will have an opportunity to see how this work may be helpful in their efforts, with particular attention to the inclusion of health services in their early childhood systems development. The work will also inform policy to support sustained services throughout the state.

### **III. Timeline**

The proposed work will begin in January 2008 and be completed by June 2008.

1. January: Start-up – engage consultants and community partners; develop outline for report; identify data and information needs
2. January – March: Gather information and data at the state and community levels; gather and review existing information and collect new information through interviews and meetings with key stakeholders.
3. April – Prepare draft of report
4. April – convene national expert panel; and have key stakeholders review and comment on draft report.
5. May – June – complete and produce final report

#### **IV. Budget**

The proposed budget for this project is \$70,000. The Cabinet’s funding will leverage close to a 2:1 match from private funders, as noted below, and be further demonstration of the effectiveness of private and public funders co-investing in advancing the ECE Cabinet’s agenda.

##### Budget Items:

1. Consultants – including financial expertise/cost modeling (440 hours of work at \$100/hour)-	\$44,000
2. Support for participation of two local communities (\$5,000 per community)	10,000
3. Meeting with National Experts – travel, honorarium, meals, facility	13,000
4. Administrative costs – travel, telephone, supplies; administrative support	3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>

##### Resources

We are requesting \$25,000 from the Early Childhood Education Cabinet, to be matched by private funding from the following sources:

- Children’s Fund of Connecticut - \$25,000
- Hartford Foundation for Public Giving - 10,000
- William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund - 5,000

A proposal also has been submitted to the Commonwealth Fund for additional support.