

Michigan Home Visiting Initiative: News You Can Use

During a recent Michigan Home Visiting Stakeholder Community of Practice Call, we received several questions about the terms and concepts used by the Michigan Home Visiting Initiative. In this issue of News You Can Use, we explain these terms and how they apply to programs in Michigan.

What is the definition of evidence-based?

In general, evidence-based programs are implemented with fidelity and use a clear, consistent model that is research-based, with a rigorous research design and grounded in relevant, empirically-based knowledge.

Is there a difference between the Federal definition of evidence-based and the Michigan definition of evidence-based programs?

Yes. The state and federal government differ slightly in how they define evidence-based practices (which are explained below). The federal government has a rigorous review process which programs must complete before meeting their definition of evidence-based. The state has a definition of evidence-based, but no review process. Therefore, it is possible for some programs to meet the state definition but not the federal definition. For example, the Maternal Infant Health Program (MIHP), Michigan's state Medicaid home visitation model meets the state definition of evidenced-based, but to date has not gone through the federal review process.

How do the State and Federal Definitions differ?

Federally, Home Visiting is defined by Title V of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 701 et 6 seq.) in section 511 (d)(3)(A)(i)(I), the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Programs or MIECHV for short. To meet the federal criteria for funding as an "evidence-based early childhood home visiting service delivery model," program models must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- At least one high- or moderate-quality impact study of the model finds favorable, statistically significant impacts in two or more of the eight outcome domains
- At least two high- or moderate-quality impact studies of the model using non-overlapping analytic study samples with one or more favorable, statistically significant impacts in the same domain

In both cases, the impacts must either (1) be found in the full sample or (2) if found for subgroups but not for the full sample, be replicated in the same domain in two or more studies using non-overlapping analytic study samples. Additionally, following the federal legislation, if the program model meets the above criteria based on findings from randomized controlled trial(s) only, then one or more favorable, statistically significant impacts must be sustained for at least one year after program enrollment, and one or more favorable, statistically significant impacts must be reported in a peer-reviewed journal.

Models are granted the evidenced-based designation based on this process, and findings are published on the HOMVEE website. Without completing the research *and* review process, a model cannot not meet the federal (MIECHV) definition of evidence-based.

In 2012, Michigan enacted its own definition of evidence-based. Under Public Act 291 of 2012 a Michigan evidence-based program is one that:

- Is research-based and grounded in relevant, empirically based knowledge.
- Is linked to program-determined outcomes and associated with a national organization, institution of higher education, or national or state public health institute.
- Has comprehensive home visitation standards that ensures high-quality service delivery and continuous quality improvement, has demonstrated significant, sustained positive outcomes, and either has been evaluated using rigorous randomized controlled research designs and the evaluation results have been published in a peer-reviewed journal or is based on quasi-experimental research using 2 or more separate, comparable client samples.
- Demonstrates strong links to other community-based services.
- Operates with fidelity to the model being delivered.
- Operates within an organization that ensures compliance with home visitation standards.

Michigan does not have a review process for home visiting programs at this time.

What are the Most Commonly Implemented Programs in Michigan?

The most commonly implemented home visiting models in Michigan are:

Early Head Start Home Visiting — Early Head Start Home Visiting serves pregnant women, infants and toddlers, as well as their families. This is a child-focused program whose goal is to increase the school readiness of young children in low-income families. *This program meets the state and federal definition of evidence-based.*

Healthy Families America® —Healthy Families America (HFA) works with overburdened families who are at-risk for adverse childhood experiences, including child maltreatment. HFA is equipped to work with families who may have histories of trauma, intimate partner violence, and mental health and/or substance abuse issues. HFA services begin prenatally or right after the birth of a baby and are offered voluntarily over a 3 to 5 year period. *This program meets the state and federal definition of evidence-based.*

Maternal Infant Health Program — The Maternal Infant Health Program (MIHP) is a home visiting program for pregnant women and infants with Medicaid insurance in Michigan. MIHP provides care coordination and health education services to promote healthy pregnancies, good birth outcomes, and healthy infants. Services are delivered by registered nurses and licensed social workers, and in some MIHPs, by registered dietitians and infant mental health specialists as well. MIHP providers are located in rural, urban, and native communities throughout the state. Services are provided through federally qualified health centers, local and regional public health departments, hospital-based clinics, and private providers. *This program only meets the state definition of evidence-based.*

Nurse Family Partnership — The Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) is a program that helps vulnerable first-time moms and their babies. Through ongoing home visits from registered nurses, low-income, first-time moms receive care and support to have a healthy pregnancy, provide responsible and competent care for their children, and become more economically self-sufficient. *This program meets the state and federal definition of evidence-based.*

Parents as Teachers™ — Parents as Teachers (PAT) believes that parents are their children's first and most influential teacher during the crucial early years of life (from before birth to kindergarten). The program's approach is intimate, relationship-based, and based on the individual needs of each family and child. *This program meets the state and federal definition of evidence-based.*