

Request for Information (RFI): Inviting comments and suggestions to inform the Maternal and Child Health Bureau Strategic Plan

Type of Notice: Request for Information

Title: Inviting comments and suggestions to inform the Maternal and Child Health Bureau Strategic Plan

Response Date: By 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on December 18, 2020

Summary: The Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) seeks input to inform its strategic plan. MCHB seeks responses to the “Questions for Public Comment” section of this Request for Information (RFI)

Response format: Submit comments by email to MCHStrategy.hrsa@hrsa.gov

Purpose

MCHB invites comments and suggestions to inform its strategic plan. The strategic plan is intended to provide a roadmap to MCHB’s future, positioning MCHB to respond effectively to future needs of maternal and child health (MCH) populations, accelerate improvement in equitable MCH health and well-being outcomes, incorporate public health advancements, leverage new technologies, and translate emerging MCH evidence into practice.

We encourage input from a broad range of organizational and individual stakeholders, including MCH service providers, states and localities, health service delivery and other community-based organizations, health care providers, researchers, community members, patients, consumers, families, caregivers, advocates, and other interested parties.

Background

With roots going back over a century, the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) administers programs, supports research, and invests in workforce training to ensure the health and well-being of mothers, children, and families across their lives. In partnership with states and communities, the Bureau supports health care and public health services for an estimated 55 million people nationwide. The MCHB vision continues to be an America where all mothers, children, and families are thriving and reach their full potential.

MCHB administers a broad range of programs that address the needs of the nation’s MCH population, the largest of which is the Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant, providing funds to every state and territory to support a statewide MCH program including a program for children and youth with special health care needs. In addition, MCHB funds are used to train MCH professionals; conduct research to inform efforts to improve health status and

services; develop standards for MCH services; and build MCH/public health capacity for assessment, planning, and quality assurance.

MCHB has 11 legislative authorities:

- Title V Maternal and Child Health State Block Grant
- Special Projects of Regional and National Significance (SPRANS)
- Community Integrated Service Systems (CISS)
- Healthy Start
- Heritable Disorders
- Autism
- Sickle Cell Disease Service Demonstration Program
- Universal Newborn Hearing Screening
- Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC)
- Family to Family Health Information Centers
- Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting

MCHB is developing a new MCHB Strategic Plan. In 2019, HRSA released an updated strategic plan to advance its mission “to improve health outcomes and address health disparities through access to quality services, a skilled health workforce, and innovative, high-value programs.” In support of HRSA’s mission, MCHB is developing an aligned strategic plan, which will guide the Bureau in advancing the health and wellbeing of mothers, children, and families in the United States. The plan will steer MCHB’s efforts to address current and emerging MCH needs, including critical COVID-19 response, and continue progress toward accelerating improvements in MCH through an emphasis on upstream determinants of health, prevention, and health equity.

Questions for Public Comment

1. What do you see as core, critical activities of MCHB? What is most important to continue into the future? Are there things not being done that should be?
2. MCHB has responsibility for a wide range of programs and initiatives. How could MCHB help its programs be more effective and successful? Do you see specific untapped opportunities related to one or more programs, populations, or areas of focus?
3. Thinking about equity, how can MCHB support efforts to eliminate disparities and unequal treatment based on race, income, disability, sex, gender, and geography? How might MCHB guidance, funding opportunities, or partnerships play a role?
4. Thinking about trends in emerging science, public health, health care, workforce, and technology, what do you see as key opportunities for MCHB?

Submitting Comments

Please submit comments via email to MCHStrategy.hrsa@hrsa.gov. If you provide comments to more than one question, please identify the specific RFI question to which each comment is directed.

Information obtained as a result of this RFI may be used by HRSA and HHS for program planning and program decision making on a non-attribution basis. Responses to this RFI may be made publicly available; therefore, respondents should not include any information that might be considered proprietary or confidential.

HRSA will not respond to any individual comments, except to clarify written responses. Comments will be received through December 18, 2020.

Special Note to Commenters:

Whenever possible, respondents are asked to draw their responses from objective, empirical, and actionable evidence and to cite this evidence within their responses.

This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes; it does not constitute a Request for Proposal, applications, proposal abstracts, or quotations. This RFI does not commit the Government to contract for any supplies or services or make a grant or cooperative agreement award. Further, HRSA is not seeking proposals through this RFI and will not accept unsolicited proposals. Responders are advised that the U.S. Government will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in response to this RFI; all costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the interested party's expense. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future procurement or program, if conducted. All submissions become Government property and will not be returned. Please note that HRSA will not respond to questions about potential policy issues related to this RFI.