

Maternal and Child Health

Expanding Access and Improving Outcomes



Abt Associates is working to improve the health and well-being of women, infants, children and youth and their families. We work in these critical areas—reproductive health, early childhood, community-based healthcare, mental health care, and services for children with special healthcare needs. Our research and analysis expertise supports health policy development and program advancements for these populations as well as the American public.

The Right Team

Abt's professionals represent the many disciplines essential to solving a wide range of maternal and child health issues. They are public health experts, economists, epidemiologists, statisticians, programmers, anthropologists, child development specialists, social workers, and experts in health communication.

Primary Data Collection in Multiple Settings

Abt conducts research in various settings including schools, child care centers, early childhood programs, and community health centers. We reduce the burden on respondents and expedite analysis and feedback by tapping into advanced technologies, including computer-aided surveys and Web-based systems.

Working With Diverse Populations

We work with diverse populations and many racial and ethnic minority groups, including African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans. Understanding their language and culture enables us to gather accurate, complete research data on the healthcare needs of these important groups.

Comprehensive Data Analysis

We analyze a broad range of primary and secondary data, including claims data, Medicare/Medicaid data, vital statistics, national household survey data, and more, to provide our clients with a comprehensive analysis. Using powerful qualitative data analysis software, we can analyze extremely large datasets efficiently and effectively.

Evaluating Policies and Systems

Our policy analysis begins with understanding the implications of healthcare policies that affect women, children, and families. Knowing that health depends on multiple systems working collaboratively—mental health plans, early childhood programs, prenatal initiatives and education—we evaluate the systems. This begins with the design of flexible, creative evaluations that track outcomes, at both the individual level and community and systems levels of care.

Reducing Health Disparities

Abt's capabilities in research and analysis cover the broad spectrum of health disparities—from infant mortality to senior health and from racial and ethnic minorities to rural residents and persons living with HIV/AIDS. This expertise is heightened by our cultural sensitivities so that we can meaningfully support health organizations and individual practitioners in serving vulnerable populations.

Evaluating and Improving Health Outcomes

Enhancing maternal and child health is a complex challenge that requires careful data gathering from diverse populations, expert analysis, and comprehensive evaluation. Only through accurate analysis can we contribute to significant program and policy improvements, and enhanced maternal and child health.

Our Work in Maternal and Child Health Promoting Knowledge Transfer for Interconception Care

Abt developed and facilitated a learning collaborative of all Healthy Start program grantees with the goal of improving processes, practices, and systems to improve interconception health status for women. The work performed for the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) of the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) helped grantees conduct meetings for peer-to-peer learning experiences, inter-team exchange and didactic learning, and guided them in adopting common performance measures to assess their progress.

Evaluating Healthy Start

The Healthy Start program provides comprehensive, community-based perinatal health services to women, infants, and families in communities with high rates of infant mortality. Abt is working with HRSA's MCHB to conduct the national evaluation of Healthy Start. This is in follow up to a previous national survey of 100 Healthy Start programs and analyses of their performance measures.

Assessing a Managed Care System for Children With Special Healthcare Needs

Abt conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the District of Columbia's Medicaid demonstration waiver program, which addressed the services offered for children with special healthcare needs. Our innovative research design produced an accurate assessment of program enrollment, implementation, and outcomes. The evaluation tapped primary data from focus groups and a telephone survey of more than 1,000 caregivers, as well as secondary data from case records and Medicaid claims data.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Comprehensive Wellness Programs for Young Children

Abt is conducting a five-year, cross-site evaluation of Project LAUNCH, which provides grants to programs for promoting child wellness and healthy development from birth to age eight. Our team has developed a program logic model and measures for assessing changes in systems and services. Ongoing data collection includes grantee site visits, telephone calls and semi-annual web-based reporting. We are also providing technical assistance to grantees on local data reporting and evaluation efforts.

Public Thinking on Reproductive Genetics

Abt was retained by Johns Hopkins University to learn the public's thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs about specific issues related to genetics and having children. We used established qualitative research methods, including focus groups, key informant interviews, and qualitative data analysis software. We conducted 21 focus groups with the general public in five U.S. cities, and 65 interviews with professionals and people affected by genetic conditions. The study results helped guide the work of the Genetics and Public Policy Center as it created policy options.

Contact

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Abt Associates is a mission-driven, global leader in research and program implementation in the fields of health, social and environmental policy, and international development. Known for its rigorous approach to solving complex challenges, Abt Associates was ranked as one of the top 20 global research firms in 2012 and also named one of the top 40 international development innovators. The company has multiple offices in the U.S. and program offices in over 40 countries.

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