

**Project Title:** Maine From the First Tooth Initiative – Phase III: Maine Perinatal & Infant Oral Health Quality Improvement

**Applicant Organization Name:** MaineHealth

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## **PROJECT ABSTRACT**

**PROBLEM:** Tooth decay (dental caries) is preventable and yet Maine children still suffer from the disease. At-risk groups of children have high levels of untreated dental disease including 24% of Maine Head Start children having untreated dental disease. There are significant barriers making access to dental care challenging for many pregnant women and most infants and young children in the state. PRAMS data reveal that 47% percent of women in Maine visited a dentist or dental clinic during pregnancy. Even though the national recommendation is that children establish dental care by age one, statewide home visiting program data (Maine Families) revealed that only 5% of parents reported their children having seen a dentist by age 12 months and this percentage was reaffirmed by Medicaid data (5.9% at age 1). Only 14% of pregnant women covered by MaineCare (over the age of 21 years) obtained care from a dental provider.

**GOALS & OBJECTIVES:** The goal of the Maine From the First Tooth (FTFT) Phase III is to improve the oral health of pregnant women and infants in Maine through a comprehensive, integrated systems development and quality improvement initiative based on the ASTDD Strategic Frameworks to Prevent and Control Early Childhood Tooth Decay and to promote Perinatal Oral Health. The objectives are to attain the following by June 2019: (1) Increase the percent of women who receive preventive dental care by a prenatal medical care provider; (2) Increase the percent of women who obtain dental care during pregnancy; (3) Increase the percent of infants who receive preventive dental care by a primary care provider; (4) Increase the percent of young children who obtain a visit with a dentist by age 1 year and age 2 years.

**METHODOLOGY:** From the First Tooth – Phase III will build upon the FTFT model and infrastructure built across the state and through formal partnerships and continued collaborative work. The model will be expanded to reach pregnant women as well as have an increased focus on improving oral health and access to oral health services for newborns. The six strategies will include (1) integrate preventive oral health care services into primary care settings, (2) expand access to dental care for pregnant women and infants, (3) engage and educate pregnant women and parents of infants in oral health concepts, (4) promote collaborations to improve oral health of pregnant women and infants, (5) promote policies that enhance the oral health of pregnant women and infants, and (6) expand existing and establish new data systems to monitor the oral health of pregnant women and infants.

**COORDINATION:** MaineHealth, a not-for-profit healthcare organization will serve as the administrative home for the project. Formal partnership agreements with two other health systems will provide statewide reach. Expert advisors and an external evaluation team will be central to the work.