Referrals to home visiting: Current practice and unrealized opportunities



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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Evidence supports ongoing investment in maternal and early childhood home visiting in the US. Yet, a small fraction of eligible families accesses these services, and little is known about how families are referred. This report describes priority populations for home visiting programs, the capacity of programs to enroll more families, common sources of referrals to home visiting, and sources from which programs want to receive more referrals. Methods: We conducted a secondary analysis of data from a national web-based survey of members of the Home Visiting Applied Research Collaborative (HARC), focusing on a small set of items that directly addressed study aims. Survey respondents (N = 87) represented local programs implementing varying home visiting models diverse in size and geographic context. Results: Programs prioritized enrollment of pregnant women; parents with mental health, substance abuse or intimate partner violence concerns; teen parents; and children with developmental delays or child welfare involvement. Most respondents reported capacity to enroll more families in their programs. Few reported receiving any referrals from pediatric providers, child welfare, early care and education, or TANF/other social services. Most desired more referrals, especially from healthcare providers, WIC, and TANF/other social services. Discussion: Given that most programs have the capacity to serve more families, this study provides insights regarding providers with whom home visiting programs might strengthen their referral systems.

Citation

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