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## **\$449,376 Grant Awarded to City of Milwaukee Health Department to Improve Health Outcomes for Families of At-Risk Mothers**

*Public health nurses will work to improve birth outcomes, child health and the self  
sufficiency of families*

The City of Milwaukee Health Department is the recipient of a 3-year, \$449,376 grant from the University of Wisconsin (UW) School of Medicine and Public Health Partnership Fund. The grant will fund the Milwaukee Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) Program. This program will implement a highly effective home visitation model that aims to improve health outcomes for children and families of first-time, at-risk mothers.

"Milwaukee suffers from unacceptably high rates of teen pregnancy, infant mortality, and poor childhood health," said Commissioner of Health Bevan K. Baker. The UW's review panel commented: "These outcomes are among the worst in the country and disproportionately involve low income and African American mothers and children. This project uses an evidence-based model of home visiting, the Nurse-Family partnership, to attempt to improve these indicators." Baker added, "We are grateful that the UW School of Medicine and Public Health recognizes the value of this national program to improve health outcomes for at-risk families."

The NFP program, which will be implemented over the next several months after recruiting and training public health nurses for the program, will provide enrolled first time mothers with 2½ years of structured home visitation services beginning during their pregnancy and continuing until the child reaches their second birthday. NFP nurses will work intensively with these mothers to improve maternal health, prenatal care and childhood health.

In published, peer-reviewed trials, the NFP intervention has shown improved birth outcomes and long-term health in children of at-risk mothers. Measurable outcomes during the three-year intervention are expected to include decreased rates of smoking, drinking and other drug use during pregnancy; decreased rates of preterm and low birth weight deliveries; longer intervals between subsequent births, and decreased rates of infant death and injury. A RAND meta-analysis revealed that although the program's costs per child are in the \$7000-\$9000 range, it can result in as much as \$5.70 in savings to society for every \$1.00 invested.

"At a time when funding resources continue to be scarce, I want to commend the Health Department for their diligence in seeking outside funds to improve health outcomes in our city," said Mayor Tom Barrett. "It is clear that the work being done by Commissioner Baker and his team is leveraging strong partnerships and making an impact in our community."

Funds for this program will augment and extend an existing 3-year, \$992,940 commitment from Columbia St. Mary's Hospital System for the Milwaukee NFP program. The Partnership Fund investment will allow this important, effective intervention to be extended to two additional high-risk zip codes currently not covered by the Columbia St. Mary's funds.

