Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Launches Innovative Home Visiting Model

Vanguard Supports First-of-Its-Kind Project Integrating Home Visiting Nurses into Pediatric Primary Care Setting

Philadelphia, Pa. – September 4, 2019 – Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) launched a new pilot program today aimed at improving the health and well-being of mothers and their young children. The project, which integrates home visiting nurses into the pediatric primary care setting, is made possible by a generous grant from the Vanguard Strong Start for Kids Program™.

This project is just one of several investments totaling more than $5 million made by Vanguard and its employees to support innovative efforts at CHOP through its Vanguard Strong Start for Kids Program™, which focuses on boosting school readiness for children near its operations in Philadelphia, Phoenix and Charlotte.

The innovative home visiting model will be led by PolicyLab, a research center at CHOP dedicated to informing practice and policy to improve child health and well-being. PolicyLab will pilot the program at CHOP's Cobbs Creek primary care site for three years. The model will employ home visiting nurses in primary care settings, while also providing families with child development education and enhanced support for finding quality child care.

Historically, home visiting programs provided voluntary, in-home services to under-resourced pregnant mothers and families to promote family health, well-being and early learning. The demand for such programs has increased in recent years as home visiting services have become a critical component of public health infrastructure across communities. This project seeks to provide families with well-rounded support to address their most pressing social and health needs, and to align the delivery of preventive services across home and doctor's office settings.

"Research continues to prove the incredible value of home visiting programs in promoting the health, development and well-being of infants and young children," said Dr. Meredith Matone, lead investigator on the project and scientific director at PolicyLab. "By supporting home-visited families within the health care system, we aim to provide high-quality, comprehensive services to families across important early childhood services."

The funding also allows PolicyLab to hire a child care navigator who will provide support to pediatricians, home visitors and families to identify high-quality, safe child care services.

"This project captures the essence of what Vanguard Strong Start for Kids was created to do. It takes proven models of care that help children grow, thrive, and learn and incorporates fresh ideas about service delivery and coordination to eliminate barriers and improve outcomes for kids," said Crystal Shannon, a principal in Vanguard's Community Stewardship department. "Our generous employees support this work through our workplace giving campaign, and we couldn't think of a better partner than PolicyLab to lead this effort—their innovative spirit and commitment to children is unparalleled."

PolicyLab will work closely with the National Nurse-Led Care Consortium (NNCC) and other partners to design and implement an integrated staffing model that will aim to improve efficiencies, reduce burden across providers and, ultimately, improve patient care. To ensure its success, researchers at PolicyLab will evaluate the new model of care to see if it improves child health outcomes, reduces trips to the emergency room, increases parental awareness of quality child care options, and improves staff satisfaction and retention.

“Families served by nurse home visitors are often facing complex social issues and require enhanced services beyond the scope of what evidence-based home visiting models can typically independently provide,” said Sarah Hexem Hubbard, Esq, executive director of NNCC. “We are excited to embark on this visionary journey to intentionally integrate our services with CHOP Primary Care in order to address the health and well-being of families, and see this integration as critical to achieving overall impact and outcomes for our communities.”

“The ultimate goal of the project will be to develop a model of integrated care that health systems and the vast array of existing home visiting models can replicate nationwide so that more young, under-resourced families have support to lead healthy, productive lives,” said Dr. Matone.

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About Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia was founded in 1855 as the nation’s first pediatric hospital. Through its long-standing commitment to providing exceptional patient care, training new generations of pediatric healthcare professionals and pioneering major research initiatives, Children’s Hospital has fostered many discoveries that have benefited children worldwide. Its pediatric research program is among the largest in the country. In addition, its unique family-centered care and public service programs have brought the 564-bed hospital recognition as a leading advocate for children and adolescents. For more information, visit http://www.chop.edu.

About PolicyLab at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia: PolicyLab at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) is dedicated to achieving optimal child health and well-being by informing program and policy changes through interdisciplinary research. Founded in 2008, PolicyLab is a Center of Emphasis within the CHOP Research Institute, one of the largest pediatric research institutes in the country. With 35 highly-regarded faculty and more than 60 passionate staff who bring expertise from myriad of fields covering health, research and health policy, our work focuses on improving public systems, improving health care delivery and improving child health outcomes. For more information, visit http://www.policylab.chop.edu.