

University of Massachusetts Medical School

Community Health Clerkship

Health Advocacy

OPTIMIZING PERINATAL OUTCOMES THROUGH WOMEN'S HEALTH SERVICES

Advocacy Organizations

What are some Local organizations that do advocacy work?	Worcester Healthy Start, Great Brook Valley, Family Health, Community Churches, Infant Mortality Task Force
What are some State level organizations that do advocacy work?	Healthy Start Initiative, Department of Public Health, Medicaid , Bureau of Family and Community Health
What are some National level organizations that do advocacy work?	March of Dimes, Healthy Start Initiative, Women Infants and Children, Medicaid, NFIMR (National Fetal-Infant Mortality Review), Maternal and Child Health Bureau
What are some International organizations that do advocacy work?	World Health Organization, UNICEF

Advocacy Issue

Looking at the State, National, and/or International level, at the websites or information from the organizations above, what is a major area of advocacy at this time? <i>Try to choose an advocacy issue that will in some way affect the local community.</i> Advocacy specifically refers to promoting legislation, policies or specific budgetary appropriations that positively affect a health issue. This may occur through decreasing barriers to accessing health services, providing an infrastructure conducive to effective health promotion programs, or directly increasing the resources and infrastructure of the public health system.	Major advocacy area: Reducing infant mortality rate Worcester Healthy Start Initiative aims at reducing infant mortality rates through providing comprehensive prenatal services. This program has been successful to date. Grant funding is up for renewal. It is important to renew this grant in order to continue the programs that have contributed to lowering the infant mortality rate.
What specific law, policy or appropriation is being advocated for?	Renewal of Healthy Start Grant
Who is doing the advocating? (Which organizations?)	Great Brook Valley, Family Health, Worcester Healthy Start Initiative, Infant Mortality Task Force
Who is being lobbied?	Federal Government
Whom will this issue affect?	Women of child-bearing age
Were they or will they (in your opinion) be successful? Why or why not? What do they need to be more successful?	According to data available for Worcester, the renewal of the grant should be approved. Rising infant mortality rates in Springfield, MA and declining infant mortality rates in Worcester, MA make it uncertain that the Worcester grant will be renewed. Documentation of the success of the program and continued advocacy may help to promote grant renewal.

What are the consequences if they are not successful?	There will be a loss of vital social and prenatal services, which may result in a rising infant mortality rate.
If they are not successful, what other strategies can be used to achieve the same goal?	Worcester Healthy Start could search for alternative sources of funding or other organizations to become involved in the same mission.
How can physicians and/or nurses be involved in this advocacy issue?	They can lobby to congress, advocate to local institutions, and write letters to state representatives.