Intervention Program at Pernet Family Health Service

Population Health Clerkship: Improving Public Awareness of the Early Intervention Program at Pernet Family Health Service

Emma C. Materne*, Veronica A. Pace*, Alyssa B. Thompson-Tucker**, Clare E. Wynne*

*School of Medicine  **Graduate School of Nursing

Pernet Family Health Service

Mission:
"In the tradition of the Little Sisters of the Assumption, Pernet Family Health Service supports the physical, social, psychological and spiritual development of individuals and families by providing home-based health and social services that lead to long-term strengthening and enhancement of family and community life."

Population:
Pernet programs reach families in Worcester and the surrounding towns. As the service is located in the low-income and culturally diverse Green-Island neighborhood, many members of the community utilize its family support services. Pernet’s Early Intervention and Parent Aide resources are available to families throughout central Massachusetts.

Programs:
"Our organization has strengthened vulnerable, low income families with emergency assistance, maternal and child home health care and family support."

"We view society as one large family, we work to promote social justice and human rights for all people, gradually improve society - one person, one family, one community at a time."

Table 1: Neighborhood Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Annual Family Income</th>
<th>Single Mother Households</th>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Education Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$24,568</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>55% are currently employed</td>
<td>81% have a high school education or less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pernet offers Early Intervention services to families with children with or at risk for developmental delays. Family Support Services for those requiring improvement with their parenting skills. Family and Community Development Program for members of the community requiring emergency assistance and enrichment services, and Maternal and Child Nursing Program for new mothers.

Early Intervention

What is Early Intervention? †
Early Intervention is a cost-free, family-centered, state required service to facilitate the developmental progress for children with developmental difficulties due to identified disabilities or certain birth or environmental circumstances.

Who is eligible for Early Intervention services at Pernet? †
Any child up to three years of age in the Worcester area, meeting a following criterion:
1. Not reaching age-appropriate milestones in one or more of the following areas of development.
2. Diagnosed with a physical, emotional, or cognitive condition that may result in a developmental delay.
3. At risk for developmental delay due to various biological and/or environmental factors.

What services are provided for Early Intervention? †
An Early Intervention team of certified professionals in a variety of specialties assess a child’s needs and implement a tailored regimen of activities and exercises designed to improve and continually assess a child’s developmental progress.

Our Project

Goal: Design an Outreach Program to Extend Pernet Early Intervention Services to Community Partners

Table 2: Developmental Milestones

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gross Motor</th>
<th>Fine Motor</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sitting</td>
<td>Eating</td>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Interacting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standing</td>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>Gesturing</td>
<td>Problem-solving</td>
<td>Cooperating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>Dressing</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>Reasoning</td>
<td>Bonding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running</td>
<td>Playing</td>
<td>Communicating</td>
<td>Remembering</td>
<td>Recognizing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Services Provided by Pernet Early Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Where?</th>
<th>What?</th>
<th>How?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>Natural environment</td>
<td>Physical therapy, Speech therapy, Occupational therapy, etc</td>
<td>Teaching families about the child’s developmental needs and teaching ways to support learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>–Home, Daycare, etc</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapist</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educator, etc</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Cities and Towns Served by Pernet Early Intervention †

Day Care Centers: 37  Medical Offices: 13

Outcome: Connected with community partners to promote Early Intervention program at Pernet Family Health Services

Recommendations for next steps: Follow-up phone call and meeting with Director of Early Intervention.

Take away points: Although Massachusetts offers free EI services to all eligible children, many families are marginalized from services by lack of knowledge or structural barriers to access.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Pernet Family Health Service Team!

References: