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State and Private Partnerships Fund Centering to Improve Infant and Maternal Mortality In New Jersey

The Nicholson Foundation, The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation and The Burke Foundation join New Jersey Department of Health in supporting the implementation of Centering as model of choice across five sites in the state

Boston, MA, April 18, 2019 – Centering Healthcare Institute (CHI) announced today that it will implement its evidence-based CenteringPregnancy® and CenteringParenting® models of group care across five community health centers in New Jersey. CHI has received funding in the amount of \$445,000 from The Nicholson Foundation, The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation and The Burke Foundation to improve infant and maternal mortality in the state. This is a collaborative effort with the New Jersey Department of Health’s ‘Healthy Women, Healthy Families’ initiative to improve pregnancy outcomes in high risk populations, address health disparities and reduce Black infant mortality.

“New Jersey joins a growing number of states that are aggressively prioritizing women and families through the investment in access to Centering,” said Angie Truesdale, Chief Executive Officer of CHI. “We are excited and honored to be part of this partnership and looking forward to supporting these five sites in improving their birth outcomes and empowering young families.”

The five sites named are Paterson Community Health Center (Paterson), Alliance Community Healthcare Inc (Jersey City), Henry J Austin Health Center (Trenton), Capital Health (Trenton) and University Hospital (Newark). Centering Healthcare Institute will provide services to support the health centers as they implement or expand the Centering model across their practices. The funding includes implementation support and facilitation training from CHI, leading up to accreditation. The organization will also hire a New Jersey Centering Program Manager to support the sites and program.

“It’s a tragic reality that race determines health outcomes for many New Jersey mothers and babies. Everyone — regardless of skin color — should be given an equal chance at a healthy, productive life,” said New Jersey Health Commissioner, Dr. Shereef Elnahal. “The New Jersey Department of Health is grateful for this public-private partnership to address these disparities in maternal and child health.”

“In New Jersey, the infant mortality rate for Black infants is more than three times that of white infants - an unacceptable disparity,” said Shannon Riley Ayers, Senior Program Officer at The Nicholson Foundation. “Our ultimate goal in bringing the Centering model to New Jersey is to create a community of practice that changes how prenatal and well-child care is delivered to reduce the disparities in infant mortality rates.”

CHI's Centering model of care combines health assessment, interactive learning and community building to help support positive health behaviors and drive better health outcomes. With over 100 published studies and peer-reviewed articles, evidence shows that Centering reduces costs, improves health outcomes for mothers and their babies and reduces racial health disparities.

"By helping mothers to have healthy pregnancies and deliver full-term babies, we can prevent lifelong physical and developmental problems. This is an opportunity for our state to show that we can change our policies and practices to reduce long-standing disparities among populations," said Melissa Litwin, Early Childhood Program Director at The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation.

"We are honored to be partnering with Centering Healthcare Institute and the New Jersey Department of Health to deliver a best-in-class intervention that directly impacts maternal and child health and supports healthier pregnancies and a strong beginning for babies. Centering's innovative group healthcare model empowers patients and ensures high-quality and equitable care," said Atiya Weiss, Executive Director, The Burke Foundation.

CenteringPregnancy is a nationally recognized model of group prenatal care shown to improve a wide range of birth outcomes including lowering risk of preterm births, reducing low birth weights and increasing breastfeeding rates. CenteringPregnancy group care follows the recommended schedule of ten prenatal visits, but each visit is ninety minutes to two hours long—giving patients ten times as much time with their provider team. Patients engage in their care by taking their weight and blood pressure, recording their health data and have private time with their provider for the clinical assessment.

CenteringParenting is CHI's pediatric group care model that offers family centered care to parents, caregivers and children who meet with their healthcare team for nine well-child visits over the first two years. Participants are actively engaged in their child's assessment at every visit: tracking growth, development, immunizations and oral health. Health assessments, immunizations and developmental screenings follow the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Bright Futures™ nationally recognized guidelines. Active participation makes parents more aware of the results and what these health indicators and milestones mean to their child's health, growth and development.

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About Centering Healthcare Institute

[CHI](#) is a national non-profit organization, based in Boston, MA, with a mission to improve health and transform the way care is delivered. With over two decades of experience as the go-to resource for group healthcare, CHI has pioneered and sustained the Centering model of group care currently offered across 580 healthcare practice sites impacting close to 70,000 patients each year. The evidence-based Centering model combines health assessment, interactive learning and community building to help support positive health behaviors and drive better health outcomes. CenteringPregnancy® and CenteringParenting® provide the highest quality of care to families from pregnancy through age two of the child. The CenteringHealthcare® model of care is being extended to many different health conditions including groups for asthma, diabetes, opioid recovery, cancer survivors, chronic pain and other patient populations. Visit www.centeringhealthcare.org for more information.

About The Nicholson Foundation

The Nicholson Foundation is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of vulnerable populations in New Jersey. The Foundation's primary goal is to improve outcomes in health and early childhood. Our

strategic approach is to transform service delivery systems by informing policy and developing sustainable models that better serve vulnerable populations. For more information about the Foundation, visit <http://thenicholsonfoundation.org>.

About The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation

The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation makes grants to pre-selected organizations working in early childhood, aging in place, and medical research. It also funds institutions with historic ties to the Taub family. A continuing focus of the Foundation is on local communities in New Jersey's Bergen and Passaic counties, in areas with the greatest needs, including Henry's home town of Paterson.

About The Burke Foundation

The Burke Foundation is a private foundation based in Princeton, New Jersey. It funds transformative early childhood initiatives to foster the healthy development of families and communities in New Jersey. The Burke Foundation focuses on three key areas: healthy pregnancies and births, positive parent-child relationships, and high-quality early care and learning. Learn more at www.burkefoundation.org.