

**The Pregnancy Assistance Fund:
Launching Programs to Support Expectant and Parenting Youth**

**Moderator: Alexandra Warner
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2:00 pm CT**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time all participants are in listen only mode until the question and answer portion. If you would like to ask a question today please press star followed by the number 1 on your touchtone phone. You will be prompted to record your first and last name. The conference is being recorded. If you have any objections you may disconnect at this time. Now I would like to turn the call over to your host, (Miss Sabrina Chapple). Thank you, ma'am, you may begin.

(Sabrina Chapple): Well, thank you. Hello, and welcome to the OAH Webinar, the pregnancy assistance fund launching programs to support expectant and parenting youth. My name is (Sabrina Chapple), and I'm the acting division director and lead for the office of adolescent health pregnancy assistance fund program. As always we have been hard at work over the last few months, and we're very excited to have you on our call today to help you gain additional insight into some of the great work that's been going on in the PAF program.

Our call today will showcase findings from a recent study of early grant implementation among the 2013 PAF grantees. Today we're grateful to be joined by (Ann Person) and (Susan Zief) from Mathematica Policy Research.

Under contract with OAH, Mathematica Policy Research interviewed PAF grant administrators from 17 states and Indian tribes about their grant strategy, context, administration, design, and implementation.

And you'll hear from the research team shortly, but before we get started, there are a few important logistics I think we should cover. First, all participants should be able to hear the audio and view the slides. If you are unable to log onto the net conference to view the slides, please be assured that the slide transcripts, the recording will be available on the OAH Web site within a couple of weeks.

The research results are also available on the OAH Web site. Note that you're all on in listen-only mode. You will be able to print the slides for today's call by clicking on the printer icon at the bottom right screen. We'll be taking questions at the end of the presentation using the Q&A function at the top of your screen. We'll also do a callout and open the phone lines, but please feel free to type your questions in the Q&A box at any given time. At this point I'd like to turn the presentation over to (Susan Zief) to get us started. Thank you.

(Susan Zief): Thank you, (Sabrina), and welcome, everyone. Thank you for joining us today on this Webinar while we share the first product of a five-year project we're conducting for OAH on programs for expectant and parenting teens. As part of that effort we are documenting the pregnancy assistance fund or PAF grantees programs, their design and their implementation, and our Webinar today will focus on the first product of that effort.

And if you are not familiar with the pregnancy assistance funds program, it is administered by the office of adolescent health and provides support for expectant and parenting teens, women, fathers, and their families. And we'll say a little more about the grants program as part of her presentation, so

without further ado I'd like to introduce my colleague, (Ann Person), who led the data collection and analysis effort for this project component. (Ann)?

(Ann Person): Thank you, (Susan), and again thank you, everyone, for joining us today. We're really excited to be able to share these findings with you. Before I launch into the presentation I do want to recognize the other folks who worked on this project, (Liz Clary), (Katie Adamek), (Valerie Caplan), and (Julie Worthington) who work with us at Mathematica.

So in today's presentation, just to give you a sense of the flow of the talk, we'll start with some brief background on the study. Then we'll delve into our findings starting at a high level and looking at grantees' rationale and objectives. Then we'll move into some more detailed information on grant administration and program design and implementation. At the end we'll wrap up with some summary observations to include conclusions from the research.

And I'll give a quick overview of next steps in the evaluation. Without repeating too much of what (Susan) mentioned before, the pregnancy assistance program was established in 2010 as part of the affordable care act. Now I'm sure as many of you on the line know, there are a lot of federal programs and their evaluations that have focused on primary pregnancy prevention, but this is really the first major systematic description of a program designed to support those youth who do become pregnant and have children of their own.

We focus on the second cohort of PAF grantees. There are 17 states and tribes included. They were funded for four years from 2013 to 2017. And the study has one component of a broader evaluation that Mathematica is conducting now, and it'll lay the foundation for the current federal evaluation of selected programs for expectant and parenting youth.

The research for this study was basically relied on a review of funded grant applications and semi-structured telephone interviews with 39 respondents representing the 17 grantees. We conducted these interviews in fall 2014 and as (Sabrina) mentioned before they focused on grant rationale and strategy, administration, and program design. And so we'll delve into findings on each of those points on today's call.

Some of you may have seen a map like this before on the OAH Web site. This one zeroes in on the 17 grantees included in this study. What you'll notice right off the bat here is that of the 17 states and tribes with current PAF grants, over half of them, 10 in fact also received cohort one grants in 2010. So they're not entirely new at implementing these programs.

The other thing I'd like to just point out here on the map is that you see a broad geographic spread, including urban and rural areas, and with a lot of contextual variation between grantee sites. So again, starting at a very high level and looking at the grant rationale and objectives, we found that although grantees are operating in very different contexts, they're motivated by a common problem.

As they see it, expectant and parenting youth are not well served, even in relatively rich service environments. In particular grantees felt that fragmented or siloed service systems prevented expectant and parenting youth from accessing the kinds of comprehensive services that they need. They also noted a lack of coordination in the various services or service providers that expectant and parenting youth would need to interact with.

So the grantees are trying to address the central problem in three primary ways. First they're enhancing the program - the components of existing

programs or approaches, and expanding programming to serve more youth. One example is a grantee where they're adding a youth development component to an existing case management program and at the same time standardizing their materials and training staff and expanding to more sites.

The second approach that the grantees are using is that they're trying to fill specific service gaps by providing a new service and/or targeting a specific underserved population. By way of example, there are actually three grantees that are explicitly attempting to take programs that focus on primary prevention and pivot so that these programs pay attention to expectant and parenting youth.

Finally the third approach involves improving coordination among agencies and programs to make wrap-around services available and at the same time coordination the grantees reported should support program sustainability by developing and institutionalizing relationships between service providers. An example of this comes from one state that has embedded their PAF programming with an existing state program and it's educating proprietors about how to work with each other as well as educating them about how to work with the target population.

This slide just gives a quick overview of the grant funding categories. And because an obvious factor shaping each grantee's approach is the category of funding that they've received. The PAF program allows prospective grantees to apply for grants in one or more of four funding categories and it's important to note that these categories are not mutually exclusive.

Category one grants support services to expectant and parenting students in institutions of higher education. Category two grants serve expectant and parenting youth and their families in high schools and community centers.

Category three grants improve services for pregnant women who are victims of domestic violence, sexual violence, sexual assault, and stalking, and then finally category four grants increase public awareness and education about services available for expectant and parenting teens, women, fathers, and families.

You'll notice that many of the grants included more than one category in their programming. One thing that's worth noting though is that no grantee was actually allowed under the programs to provide only grant category four funds. Dealing a bit deeper into the details of grantees' approaches, we examined how grantees are organizing themselves and how they're administering past funds.

And we identified four key trends among the grantees. First we found that small teams of two to four administrative staff tend to administer the past grants. These don't typically include a lot of full time equivalent staff members. Rather there tended to be one FTE and then maybe a few others with some proportion of their FTE dedicated to the grant.

Secondly the past grant program encourages grantees to leverage both formal and informal partnerships. All grantees are - were doing this primarily for the purposes of reducing barriers to service access and linking participants with specific services, but as I mentioned before, these partnerships can also support program sustainability. It's interesting to note that the partnerships occur both at the grant level, that is at the state or tribal level between agencies, but they also occur at the subaward or provider level out in the community.

Third, among all the grantees in this cohort, there were 17 again, only the three tribal grantees actually provide services directly to youth and their

families. The remainder, the 14 grantees that are state, make subawards to other organizations to provide direct services to youth and families, and we can't really say why the tribal grantees share this unique feature. It wasn't actually part of our interview protocol.

But it may have something to do with the fact that the tribes tend to have their own suite of service agencies under the single umbrella of tribal governance. Finally on grant administration we found that grantees were slick about equally in their approach to how they worked with provider subawards, whether or not they allowed them flexibility in implementing the grant funded services or on the other hand if they tried to reduce variability in how service is provided.

And this is - was interesting. They allowed flexibility with respect to things like the particular curriculum or program components that providers would use, the dosage level of different services they offered, the service delivery mode or the setting, and they justified the flexibility in terms of ensuring that the services were appropriate for the community in which they were being offered or for the particular target population that they were serving.

At the other end of the spectrum, the grantees who were seeking to reduce variability tended to justify that as an approach - as a means to ensure fidelity to a particular program model, but this was a big point of contrast among the 17 grantees. In looking at the lead agencies that were administering the PAF grants, we see that the biggest group were administered out of state health agencies, and this is interesting to an - it's interesting to note that although the PAF grants aim to serve high school aged youth and students enrolled in institutions of higher education, only three grants are actually housed in an education agency.

And this might reflect the importance that the grantees emphasized in the interviews of working across agencies or sectors to address the comprehensive needs of expectant and parenting youth. Again you'll see that three grants were administered by tribal entities, and then the remaining grants were housed in social services or other agencies, for example a department of justice housed a category three intimate partner violence focus grant.

Another was in the department of children and family services and one was actually led by a quasi-public nonprofit agency. As I mentioned before, most grantees, 14 of the 17, used subawards to deliver services. And among those who did this, they made subawards to a total of 120 distinct provider organizations, and it raised between 4 and 27 provider organizations per grantee with a mean of 9 subawards that they worked through.

Among the 14 grantees using subawards to provide direct services to youth and families, grantees made individual subawards ranging from about \$40,000 to \$250,000 per year per provider. And at the end of the day they ended up putting out about 69% of their annual grant funds to these direct service providers. And just as a point of reference I just noticed it's not actually included on this slide, the grants - grantees received between \$500,000 and \$1.5 million annually under the grants, so that gives you some sense of the scope.

Looking at the types of entities that were providing services, that is the groups that received these subawards, the - to provide services, the largest group of provider organizations, 38 out of 123 or 31%, were to education related entities, including school districts, state education agencies, institutions of higher education and high schools, both alternative and traditional high schools.

I think this reflects the overarching intention of the PAF program to serve school aged youth and students in higher ed. The next largest group of provider organizations are community based organizations, that was 31 out of 120 subawards or 123 providers total or 25%. Together with education institutions this reflects the fact that the bulk of the grantees are implementing category two grants, which of course targets students in high schools and community centers.

Just in case folks are wondering, the types of community organizations represented in this second to largest group varied widely. Some were nonprofits explicitly serving pregnant women or women with infants. There were also organizations working to prevent child abuse, dropouts, incarceration and so on.

So moving on to the program design and implementation, just to summarize our key findings, you see on this slide that you can think about what programs the PAF grantees are offering, how they're offering them, to whom, and where. So PAF programs are largely focused on parenting skills, and they often combine this with case management and referrals.

And in terms of whom they are serving, most PAF programs are not targeting a specific sub-population of expectant and parenting youth. They may indeed end up serving a more specific population just given their geographic focus, but they don't intentionally exclude other groups. Also they plan to serve nearly 30,000 participants over the course of the grant period. In terms of where the grants are being - the programs are being offered, most are implemented in community centers and educational facilities, again in line with who the subawardee providers are, and in line with the preponderance of category two grants under - among the group.

When you think about finally when you think about the reason why grantees are designing these multi-focused and multi-component programs it appears to be an attempt to build programs for expectant and parenting youth even as evidence in this area is relatively thin. It's not that there's no evidence, but the grantees seem to be trying a lot of different programmatic approaches under the PAF umbrella to see what they could find would work.

The next few slides that I show you will add some detail on each of these categories, the what they're doing, how, for whom, and where. So looking at what programs entail, we found that the substantive focus, that is the content of the PAF programming, it aligns largely with the substantive areas emphasized in the PAF funding announcement, specifically half or more of the 24 programs focus on parenting skills development, delaying subsequent pregnancy, educational attainment, and/or healthy relationships.

And I'd like to note on this slide and then as we move through several other slides that look like this, one challenge that we as the research team faced was finding a common language across grantees to describe their programs. You know, every grantee uses a particular terminology when they describe what they're doing. It was our task to really sort of synthesize that information and try to land on a common language to talk about the grants.

So I will say for those of you on the phone who are grantees, we do recognize that the terminology that you use may not align perfectly with the terminology that we use here, but we worked with OAH to try to find the best common language to describe the grant, even if it is at a high level. All right, so looking now at how the programs are delivered, we found that the most common program components were case management and referral for services.

These were offered by 16 programs each, and they were often combined, in fact, 11 programs, almost half of all used a combined approach with case management and referral for services. Another 11 programs included a group delivered curriculum and in some cases this was the crux of the program, but it was typically combined with other components. One very chemical example involves a grantee that offered a particular evidence based curriculum as their main program component but then complemented it with several other supports including home visiting, case management as needed, and child care.

Looking at who is served by the grants we see that most of the programs did not explicitly target a specific subpopulation of expectant and parenting youth. However it is worth noting that over half, 13 of 24, serve a relatively younger population, that is participants 18 years of age and under. And 11 programs target specific geographic areas and so by default they end up serving distinct racial or ethnic groups simply because of the residential segregation that we see in those communities.

Though the speaker might at first glance make it seem as if there's no distinction between programs serving males and females, you see that there are 21 programs surveying expectant and parenting females and another 21 serving expectant and parenting males, but there are actually three programs each that target either males or females and then the rest of them target both.

For what it's worth the other category at the bottom included groups such as LGBT youth, youth with disabilities and rural populations. Of the 24 programs funded by the 17 grantees, the majority operate in community centers and educational settings. Again this isn't surprising given the prevalence of categories one and two grants that serve those - serve participants in high schools and colleges.

It's important to note though that any single program can operate out of multiple settings and in fact most do. For example, one grantee runs a program in traditional and alternative high schools, community centers, participant homes, and school based health centers. It's a single program but it's offered in all those various locations. Other programs operate out of fewer settings, and they may operate out of a single location.

And that was the case relatively frequently with those programs that serve students on community colleges. In talking to the grantees something they emphasized about the program implementation settings was that offering them in - offering the programs in diverse settings allowed them to reach youth - the term that we actually heard from several respondents, to reach youth where they are, in places where they're already going or where they're comfortable receiving services.

So stepping back then to provide some overarching summarization and conclusion, you can see from our findings on early grant implementation that the PAF grantees accomplished a great deal in their first year of the grant. They hired staff, developed and/or refined their program approaches for 24 distinct programs, they made subawards to 120 organizations, they launched those 24 programs aspiring to serve more than - nearly 30,000 youth.

The grantees have combined multiple program components to meet the comprehensive needs that they observe among expectant and parenting youth and their families and in doing this they typically rely on case management and/or referrals. A second multi-component approach does require extensive service coordination, and it'll be interesting to learn from grantees how that plays out over the full grant period, as I'm sure any of you who have ever implemented a program like this know interagency or interorganizational coordination can be a very challenging and time consuming task.

So we hope to study that more in our future work. Finally the ways that the grantees have pieced together these various program components with varying levels of evidence for the effectiveness of the sum or parts of the program, it is a call for more research on how best to serve expectant and parenting youth, and of course I wouldn't be a researcher worth my salt if I didn't say that, but even the grantees themselves spoke to this issue, that there's what they describe in some cases as a dearth of evidence-based programming for this highly vulnerable population.

So we hope to actually in this work and in our future work really build that evidence base. Just very briefly, looking ahead the grantees were just beginning to implement their programs when we spoke to them in the fall of 2014, and so the majority of those 30,000 youth will actually be served in the remaining years of the grant period between now and the summer of 2017.

Looking ahead they're all already thinking about their sustainability plans, and so far those included obtaining additional funding from other sources, including other federal funds as well as other state and private funds, continuing to leverage these partnerships that they've been working so hard to build, and finally by integrating PAF into other programming in the state or tribal region.

Looking on the evaluation side, we at Mathematica will continue to document lessons from these grantees in particular, we'll try to look at them under sort of full implementation conditions, conducting a second round of telephone interviews toward the end of the grant period. And with that I want to turn to (Susan) and see if we've had any questions come in via the Q&A feature.

(Susan Zief): Thank you, (Ann). No, we have not yet. I encourage attendees who do have a question to submit it through the Q&A. We will also open the lines soon to take your verbal questions. As (Ann) has alluded to, this has been a really interesting effort and very inspiring effort to learn from all of the 17 current PAF grantees about the programs, who they serve, what they do, the settings in which they provide services.

And we greatly look forward to the second set of interviews when we get to hear more about implementation several years into the grant period, so thank you very much for contributing to that effort and for continuing to inform the field about the valuable work that you do. So I have not yet seen any questions come in. (Sabrina), how about if I turn things back to you and we can open the lines for Q&A?

(Sabrina Chapple): Sounds good, thanks, (Susan). Operator, can you please field the call line to see if we have any questions?

Coordinator: Certainly, (Miss Chapple). Thank you. If you would like to ask a question over the audio lines, please press star followed by the number one at this time. You'll be prompted to record your first and last name. Please check that your phone is unmuted before you record. If you join the queue and then decide to withdraw your question, you can do so by pressing star two. Once again, press star then one to queue up and ask a question. Thank you. So far we have no questions queuing up.

(Ann Person): I can also move back to a previous slide if anyone's interested in looking more closely at a previous slide.

(Sabrina Chapple): This is (Susan) and (Ann), it's (Sabrina), while maybe questions are being pondered out in the field, you alluded to that there's going to be a follow up to

this. Can you just tell us a little bit more about what's in those plans, about what's the follow up with this cohort?

(Susan Zief): Sure, (Sabrina), we have not yet finalized the plan with the office of adolescent health, but there - the plans do include a return to all or a subset of the grantees to understand more about what it really took, what the successes and what the challenges were for implementing these programs, and so the findings of this report will then be complemented by those interviews.

(Sabrina Chapple): Great, thank you. Operator, do we have any additional questions?

Coordinator: Yes, (Debbie Herrera), your line is open.

(Debbie Herrera): Hello?

Coordinator: Yes, did you have a question, ma'am?

(Debbie Herrera): Oh, yes, well, so I was thinking about sustainability, it's one of the biggest issues that we've run into with our grantees, so I was just wondering if there was - if you could say any more about how other organizations have been looking to integrate PAF into other state or tribal programs depending on where they are.

(Susan Zief): Yes, thank you, I can address that question. The - in many ways these programs, they weren't really starting from scratch, as I mentioned on the slide with the map. Ten of them actually had prior PAF grants. But even for those who didn't have prior PAF grants, we heard a lot about seeking some continuity in terms of the services they were offering.

But at the same time then taking those three different approaches to try to better serve this particular population, and so the truth is a lot of the services that are out there you know, whether those be reproductive health services, perinatal health services, education, job training, career planning, that sort of thing, a lot of the sort of services themselves or the program components were out there already being offered somewhere in the communities, either by public agencies or by nonprofit providers and sometimes even for profit private providers.

But what the grantees tried to do was to build a focus around expectant and parenting youth specifically into those programs and then pull those services - or rather into those services I should say, and then pull those services together under the umbrella of the PAF grant. And this is also why, to kind of get back to your point about you started by asking about sustainability, or at least by mentioning sustainability.

This is why the grantees felt that partnerships and integration and that kind of coordination would actually help promote sustainability because if you got a program again just as an easy example, reproductive health program that has much more stable public funding and will be around from year to year with less of anxiety, if you can build attention to and the ability to serve the expectant and parenting youth population in that kind of program or I guess in that case it would be the parenting youth population in that program, you really have a better shot at the sustainability of that service. Does that answer your question? Did that make sense?

(Debbie Herrera): Yes, definitely. That's really helpful, thank you.

(Susan Zief): Fine, and I'd just like to add the program to answer the question and just to encourage you that we're here at OAH, we're continuing our efforts in to

provide technical assistance and training around sustainability and some upcoming opportunities on where you and your program and maybe some of your subawardees will be able to work with us to really maybe develop some strategies on how you can begin to integrate this work.

So be on the lookout for some of that information through our OAH sky desk. It will come in the form of we'll be doing some cluster calls, and as well as we still have the individual technical assistance available to each of the PAF grantees.

(Debbie Herrera): Great, thank you.

(Susan Zief): You're welcome.

(Sabrina Chapple): Operator, do we have any other questions?

Coordinator: There are no more questions, thank you.

(Sabrina Chapple): Okay.

(Ann Person): I actually wanted to invite - I know that a few of our co-authors from Mathematica are actually on the line and I wanted to specifically invite those folks, if there's something I glossed over or maybe didn't give adequate attention to that you would like to emphasize for the audience, I would invite you to do that.

Coordinator: I'll remind you that you can press star then one to have your line opened up.

(Susan Zief): Okay.

Coordinator: No responses at this time.

(Sabrina Chapple): No responses, okay. Well...

Coordinator: Oh, one just came up. One moment, I'll get that name.

(Sabrina Chapple): Okay, thank you.

Coordinator: (Liz Clary), I've opened your line.

(Liz Clary): Thank you so much, hi, (Ann). I was going to say actually that I think this covered everything that we discovered during these interviews really well, and just that I don't have anything to add.

(Ann Person): Thank you, (Liz). (Liz) was one of our primary co-authors.

(Sabrina Chapple): Thank you, (Liz).

((Crosstalk))

(Sabrina Chapple): If there's not any additional questions, (Susan), (Ann), and team, I guess we could begin to go ahead and close this out. Can we just double check, (Susan), and make sure we don't have any questions from the Q&A box?

(Susan Zief): Absolutely, I'm looking into that now, (Sabrina). No, there is nothing there. (Ann) does have the slide up that has the email address for herself and myself, so we do encourage you to reach out if you have questions and as (Sabrina) said, you can print the slides and they will be available on the OAH Web site in the near future. Is that right, (Sabrina)?

(Sabrina Chapple): Correct. Well let me go ahead and end with my personal thanks to first of all, all of our PAF grantees and the OAH staff for all that you all do, day in and day out on the job and within your communities, your commitment to serving and meeting the needs of young parents, their families, and victims of domestic and sexual violence is really what makes the program great.

I also want to thank Mathematica, thank you (Susan) and (Ann) and your entire team for helping to make this research study possible, and again thank you all who joined today. We thank you for your continued interest in the pregnancy assistance fund program, and please take the time to share this report and this event with your staff and colleagues and others who you think might be interested, and as well stay tuned for more information about the study's next steps. Thank you all. This concludes our Webinar.

Coordinator: Thank you for your participation today. All parties may disconnect at this time.

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