

TITLE X GRANTEE PROFILE: SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM

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The South Dakota Department of Health Family Planning Program (SDFPP) has participated in the Title X program for nearly 50 years. The SDFPP has brought family planning services to men and women of reproductive age across the state through its network of public and private agencies. The SDFPP network provides voluntary services to help men and women with postponing, preventing, or achieving pregnancy, and facilitating the birth spacing of their children, among other reproductive health services.

South Dakota has approximately 865,454 residents living in a rural and frontier landscape stretching across more than 75,000 square miles. With more than half of the state's counties considered frontier and nearly two-thirds of South Dakota federally designated as Health Professional Shortage Areas, many SDFPP clients have to travel more than 50 miles to access family planning services.

"Transportation is a big conversation in the office," says SDFPP Title X program manager. "If we can manage to get providers to South Dakota—how can we help clients get here? When we see these frontier populations, they aren't just here for reproductive healthcare. They're here for groceries, oil changes, general healthcare—and it might be the whole family." Many SDFPP community health nurses travel among service sites and share information about Title X clinics across their programs and in their communities to help connect these populations to care.

In addition to the frontier geography, South Dakota is unique in its significant population of American Indians (10.3 percent of the state's population, compared to 1.7 percent nationally). A total of nine federally recognized tribal nations lie within the state. The largest is Pine Ridge Indian Reservation (Oglala Lakota/Sioux), which consists of 3,468 square miles and is the eighth largest reservation in the United States. In 2018, 41 percent of all South Dakota births in which the mothers were younger than age 20 were women of American Indian race/ethnicity.

To reach this population and ensure connection to family planning care, the South Dakota Department of Health (DOH) emphasizes culturally competent services with regular training across the department, including the SDFPP and federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) that are part of the SDFPP network.

FAST FACTS

HHS Region:	8
Year of initial Title X funding:	1972
Grantee tenure:	48 years
# of subrecipients:	6
# of service sites:	22

Website: [SDFPP](#)

COMMUNITY CHALLENGES

- Nearly two-thirds of South Dakota is designated by the federal government as a Health Professional Shortage Area.
- Rates of teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections in South Dakota exceed national averages.

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The SDFPP has worked with FQHCs in the state to provide services on two of the tribal reservations and is on track to bring Title X services to a third reservation. The SDFPP nurse consultant notes that one of their biggest successes in the past few years has been working within the FQHC community and leveraging the FQHCs' existing relationships with tribal health centers.

The SDFPP and its clinic sites have had to pivot to ensure uninterrupted care for their clients during the COVID-19 pandemic. The SDFPP program manager explains, "We have service sites run by the state, subrecipient sites run by outside organizations, and public health alliance sites ... so services and populations don't look the same across the board. Some provide telephone services, others, more sophisticated telehealth. The response is localized to best meet the needs of those communities."

Despite setbacks from COVID-19, the SDFPP and DOH continue to strategize, brainstorm, and plan for the future of family planning services with the South Dakota Family Planning Sustainability Workgroup, composed of DOH leadership and program managers. The SDFPP recently reworked its service model to ensure it could provide quality services to more people, which led to the development of the workgroup.

"Now, we're doing more partnership-based work and looking for medical homes and holistic care housed in clinical settings," says the SDFPP program manager. A collaborative statewide needs assessment will be completed in the near future to ensure the SDFPP is prepared to continue providing these important services to South Dakotans.

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Special thanks to Jennifer Folliard, maternal and child health director (DOH), Sara Gloe, SDFPP Title X program manager, and Emily Johnson, SDFPP nurse consultant, for their contributions to this story.

ABOUT TITLE X

For 50 years, Title X family planning clinics have played a critical role in ensuring access to a broad range of family planning and related preventive health services for millions of low-income or uninsured individuals and others. Title X is the only federal grant program dedicated solely to providing individuals with comprehensive family planning and related preventive health services.

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