

REACH U.S.

Brownsville Action Community for Health Equality (BACHE)

Brooklyn, New York

A REACH Action Community (AC)

Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health Across the U.S. (REACH U.S.) is a national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) program aimed at eliminating racial and ethnic health disparities. It utilizes community-based approaches to reduce the burden of chronic illness in specific at-risk populations. There are 22 **REACH Action Communities** using practice-based and evidence-based programs. These programs look at cultural and environmental influences related to health disparities and their underlying causes. They develop, evaluate, and share their culturally specific and relevant strategies and best practices.

ISSUE

The Brownsville Action Community for Health Equality (BACHE) employs a community-based participatory approach to reduce the disproportionately high rate of infant mortality among African American and Latina women between 14-49 years-of-age in the Brownsville area of Brooklyn, New York. Because high infant mortality is partly driven by pre-term birth rates as well as the fragmentation of medical and social services, BACHE's primary objective is to create system change in the delivery of perinatal services in the community. It seeks to implement an enhanced approach to care and screening through the integration of medical and social services.

ACTIVITIES

- Leads a coalition of more than 16 community-based partners and community health and social services providers dedicated to the project; making efforts to incorporate input from the priority population and key stakeholders during all phases of planning and implementation.

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- Coordinates and evaluates a pilot program promoting the use of prenatal risk assessment (PRA) criteria among four healthcare providers serving 60% of the target population.
- Maintains a newly created community-based navigation system (CBNS) linking medical and social service providers to improve the coordination of referrals and follow-up.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- Prepared local service providers for New York State's adoption of enhanced, standardized prenatal risk assessment (PRA) criteria that screen women for medical and psychosocial risks that may trigger prematurity and other poor birth outcomes.
- Engaged a team of local physicians, medical administrators, social service providers, and managed care plan administrators to identify and adapt a prenatal risk assessment (PRA) tool that screens women for medical and psychosocial risks.
- Partnered with the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Brooklyn District Public Health Office Healthy Start Program to further develop a Web-based community service navigation system (CBSNS).
- Identified best practices that may be scalable and replicated nationwide, including those related to adoption of enhanced PRA criteria, the CBSNS, and building effective coalitions of local physicians, medical administrators, social service providers, and large managed care organizations (MCOs).

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