



Media Contacts:
Pamela Davenport
(801) 209-0986
Kate Lilja
(801) 835-8649

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SLVHD Launches Nurse-Family Partnership Program

*Home visitation program to foster prenatal and early childhood health;
result in substantial economic savings*

(Salt Lake County) – Salt Lake Valley Health Department (SLVHD) officials and Salt Lake County Mayor Peter Corroon announced today the launch of a new program designed to improve birth outcomes for low-income women in Salt Lake County. The Nurse-Family Partnership Program, the first of its kind in Utah, enrolls low-income women who are pregnant with their first child in a prenatal and postnatal home visitation program.

“We are excited to offer the Nurse-Family Partnership Program in Salt Lake County,” said Audrey Stevenson, director of Family Health Services. “This program is a unique approach to promoting early childhood health and compliments the health department’s mission of promoting healthy communities through preventive care. It is an incredibly cost-effective investment in the well-being of our community’s children and families.”

The Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) is a national evidence-based nurse home visitation program that improves the health, well-being and self-sufficiency of low-income, first-time parents and their children by establishing long-term relationships between public health nurses and families. Highly trained, registered nurses begin services early in pregnancy and continue providing support to the mother and child through the child’s second year, working with the mother to:

- Have a healthy pregnancy and a healthy baby,
- Become a better parent,
- Build a strong network of support of her and her baby,
- Make the home a safe place for the baby to live and play,
- Find ways to continue her education and develop job skills,
- Set goals for her family’s future and find ways to help her reach them.

“Independent analyses have shown that communities benefit socially and financially when they invest in NFP,” explained Mayor Peter Corroon, Salt Lake County. “The RAND Corporation calls Nurse-Family Partnership “a wise choice” that has favorable economic return to communities of \$5.70 for every public dollar spent on the program.”

The RAND study also identified the following economic savings:

- Increased tax revenues from increased employment and earnings by program participants including state and federal taxes, Social Security contributions and state and local sales taxes.

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- Decreased welfare aid including Medicaid, Food Stamps, Aid to Families with Dependent Children and general assistance by counties.
- Reduced Expenditures for education, health and other services including special education, emergency room visits and homeless shelters
- Lower criminal justice system costs including arrest, adjudication and incarceration expenses.

The SLVHD is the first organization in Utah to implement the NFP model to address healthy birth outcomes. NFP is currently serving families in more than 280 counties in 22 states across the nation. The SLVHD Nurse-Family Partnership program is comprised of four Public Health Nurses and a Nurse Supervisor, all of whom have recently completed standardized training by the NFP National Service Office.

“Our program is poised to assist 100 families in Salt Lake County,” explains Kami Peterson, Public Health Nurse Manager. “We have partnered with several local agencies, including SLVHD WIC clinics and the Baby Your Baby campaign, to help us reach women in our community who can benefit from this nurturing home visitation program.”

In published, peer-reviewed trials, the NFP intervention has shown improved birth outcomes and long-term health in the children of at-risk mothers. Measurable outcomes during the two and a half-year intervention are expected to include decreased rates of smoking, drinking and other drug use during pregnancy; decreased rates of preterm and low birth weight deliveries; longer intervals between subsequent births, and decreased rates of childhoods injury. Both the Washington State Institute for Public Policy and the RAND Corporation have identified Nurse-Family Partnership as one of the most cost-effective programs of its kind, returning over \$17,000 in public fund for every family served.

“The effort to bring NFP to Salt Lake County is the culmination dedicated individuals coming together and we applaud all of them,” continued Kellie Teter, NFP National Service Office. “SLVHD has also hired an outstanding team of Nurse Home Visitors – they are the foundation of this program and we applaud their dedication and capacity to carry the hopes, dreams, and challenges of the families they serve.”

For more information visit the Salt Lake Valley Health Department website at www.slvhealth.org or call (801) 468-2843. Information on the national organization can be found at www.nursefamilypartnership.org.

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