

State of New Jersey

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Announces Thousands of New Jersey Women Benefitting from Restoration of \$7.5 Million for Women's Health Care and Family Planning Services

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Funding has Allowed Clinics to Offer Increased HIV-Prevention (PrEP) Counseling

NEWARK - Governor Phil Murphy today announced that an additional 10,000 New Jerseyans received comprehensive and enhanced preventive health care following the restoration of \$7.5 million for family planning services for the Fiscal Year 2018 and Fiscal Year 2019 budgets. The funding restoration has allowed clinics to expand services and hours, bringing the total number of people served to nearly 110,000.

"We cannot have a stronger and fairer New Jersey unless we ensure access to family planning services, to critical cancer screenings, and to prenatal care, for every woman, in every corner of our state," **said Governor Phil Murphy**. "These clinics are often the only health care providers that women encounter in a given year. They provide critical primary and preventive health care to patients—which is the foundation of good health."

The Governor made the announcement at the New Jersey Family Planning League (NJFPL) office in Newark. Since the reinstatement and continuation of funding, the NJFPL has increased their network to 47 sites—including five additional centers now providing family planning services. The NJFPL funds 10 agencies that operate these 47 sites in 21 counties throughout the state. The additional sites are Zufall Health Centers in Dover and Hackettstown and the North Hudson Community Action Corporation in Harrison and Englewood, as well as the DAYAM (Department of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine) program at Rutgers Newark.

"New Jersey's Title X family planning clinics represent a critical pillar of the state's health care system. Thanks to Governor Murphy's restoration of funding—the first piece of legislation he signed after taking office—thousands more women in New Jersey are able to get breast and cervical cancer screening, contraceptive care, and more at the same place they get care for their children and families," **said New Jersey Department of Health Commissioner Dr. Shereef Elnahal**. "The expansion of services at the facilities will ensure greater access to comprehensive care. Better support for our family planning clinics is part of the administration's laser focus on health equity and closing disparity gaps. This is particularly important in our communities of color, where the disparities in maternal and child health are inexcusable."

Family Planning sites have also increased free screenings for Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) by 40 percent, with more than 80,000 tests provided. In the last five years, the U.S. has reported a 22 percent increase in reported Chlamydia cases and a 67 percent increase in reported Gonorrhea cases. During this same time, New Jersey has seen a 24 percent increase in reported Chlamydia and a 35 percent increase in Gonorrhea. Given the increased incidence, additional testing and treatment is critical.

Thanks to the restoration of funding, all family planning clinics will also begin to offer Pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV prevention (PrEP) counseling this year. PrEP is a daily medication that is highly effective at preventing the acquisition of HIV. When taken as prescribed, PrEP reduces a person's chances of contracting HIV by more than 92 percent. The addition of this service gives clients another resource to protect their health in the same site they receive other health care. This initiative will expand access to counseling beyond the current PrEP program, which includes 31 sites throughout the state. Increasing the use of PrEP is part of the Murphy Administration's

commitment to end the HIV epidemic in New Jersey by 2025 as part of the Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U) campaign.

"Due to a bevy of health issues that I face, reproductive health care is critical to my overall health," **said Laine Yuhas, a Planned Parenthood patient from Wall, NJ.** "Planned Parenthood has helped ensure I get the care I need, and the family planning funding restoration helped keep that care accessible and affordable for me."

The NJFPL network includes a total of 47 locations throughout the state. This network is comprised of a diverse group of organizations including Federally Qualified Health Centers, Planned Parenthood affiliates, the Cape May County Health Department and other non-profit family planning service providers.

To address maternal and child health inequities for minority communities, the Department of Health created a new, five-year initiative called Healthy Women, Healthy Families, which will provide \$4.7 million in grant funding to community-based programs that target high-need areas.

"Providing greater access to family planning services leads to better health outcomes for New Jersey's women and children," **said First Lady Tammy Murphy.** "In a state with a maternal death rate nearly double the national average, and where mothers of color are five times more likely to die from maternity-related complications than white mothers, access to comprehensive health care can literally mean the difference between life and death."

The Healthy Women, Healthy Families funding, coupled with the \$32 million to reimburse community health centers for comprehensive health services, \$12 million for cancer screening and prevention, and \$4.3 million to STD services, will further efforts to protect the health of residents.

"I share Governor Murphy's strong commitment to protecting women's right to make their own health choices," **said Department of Human Services Commissioner Carole Johnson.** "Investing in women's health is not only smart health care policy, it is smart economic policy. It is the right thing to do for New Jersey's women and their families."

Commissioner Johnson said that the Department of Human Services has worked to enhance health care services for women by strengthening its Medicaid program. NJ FamilyCare provides approximately \$15 million annually in contraceptive care and family planning services and is building on this work by expanding Medicaid coverage for family planning services for women with incomes up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Human Services is also now providing coverage of long-acting reversible contraception, or LARC, in all settings. LARC is one of the most effective forms of contraception and offering LARC post-partum gives women more choices and options to meet their family planning goals. Medicaid also has expanded access to tobacco cessation benefits and created new diabetes prevention benefits, which will help to address important health risk factors when women choose to become pregnant.

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