

HOPE



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Visiting Nurse & Hospice
of Vermont and New Hampshire

The Maternal And Child Health Program



What is the Visiting Nurses Association & Hospice and what do they do?

"I want people to understand that our work is so much more than weighing a baby, doing a blood draw... We do everything in our power to help a family become more self-sufficient, more successful. All our nurses are committed to doing whatever it takes for the families we serve" - VNAH Nurse

The Visiting Nurses Association & Hospice of Vermont and New Hampshire (VNAH) is a non-profit healthcare organization dedicated to providing services that contribute to the well-being of the people who live in our communities. This is accomplished by delivering the highest quality home and community-based health care services to individuals and their families who reside locally.

VNAH serves 86 towns in Vermont and New Hampshire and covers 3,000 square miles along the Connecticut River Valley. The VNAH cares for more than 6,000 people each year, and makes 150,000 home visits annually to people of all ages, at all stages of life. One of the programs that they offer to families is called the Maternal and Child Health program.

What is the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) program and who does it serve?

The Maternal and Child Health (MCH) program provides medical and social services to families as a whole. The MCH Visiting Nurses are trained specialists in child development and pediatrics, while the MCH Family Support Home Visitors have human services backgrounds. The MCH program gives parents access to information and support networks that can help them become more successful parents.

MCH families are Medicaid eligible. They are referred to the MCH program through the department of health, hospitals, and pediatricians with the intent of providing and promoting preventative health care and helping children reach healthy developmental milestones on schedule. Families are often young and may not have completed high school. They may be homeless, lack transportation, be suffering from domestic violence or battling substance abuse.



How many families are helped by Maternal and Child Health program and how are these services paid for?

The Maternal and Child Health program served 869 families last year and thousands of visits were made to these families by VNAH caregivers. The majority of VNAH's care is provided without cost to the families.

Reimbursements from Medicare and Medicaid cover some operating expenses, but the costs of MCH programs significantly exceed those reimbursements. Outreach programs and free community parenting workshops are not reimbursed at all. Medicaid pays for the home visits, but it does not cover the cost of the time required for outreach, clinical supervision, special training for MCH nurses or mileage reimbursement for home visits. The VNAH covered more than \$260,000 to pay for expenses that were not reimbursed.

How has H.O.P.E. contributed to this effort?

H.O.P.E.'s mission is to partner with organizations and engage in activities that strengthen and create sustainable, positive change in communities and the environment. The Maternal and Child Health program does just this by creating opportunities for families to "break cycles of dependency" and to "achieve self-reliance." The program accomplishes this by providing reliable child health guidance, which helps women to grow and develop as mothers, thus reducing the risk of child neglect and abuse.

H.O.P.E. donated \$15,000 to help fund the MCH program. Our donation was combined with other donations from VNAH supporters. With this money the organization was able to make 4,658 visits to pediatric patients and their families. In addition to these visits, the VNAH was able to purchase specialized pediatric equipment like fetal Doppler heartbeat monitors, infant stethoscopes, digital scales and folding measuring boards.