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**Aspire Indiana Health Receives \$2M Grant to Address Infant Mortality in Madison County**

NOBLESVILLE, IN (1/16/17) -- Aspire Indiana Health has been awarded \$2M to address the high infant mortality rate in Madison County. The grant from The Indiana State Department of Health will be distributed over four years and will provide comprehensive services for women in Madison County between the ages of 15 and 34.

Aspire Indiana Health is one of 10 recipients of grants funded by the ISDH Safety Pin program, which the state legislature created in 2015 in response to Indiana's rising infant mortality rate. In 2014, Indiana's infant mortality rate was 7 per every 1,000 births, compared with the national average of 5.8. Aspire Indiana Health and its partner Aspire Indiana currently work with a large number of individuals within the target population and this funding will provide for an expansion of care focused on the health of infants, their mothers, and creating a safe environment for their long-term development.



The new program addresses all three leading causes of infant death: prematurity, birth defects, and sleep-related deaths. In addition, the program will focus on the social determinants of health for women and newborns, including housing, education, social services, and nutrition.

To combat prematurity and birth defects, the Aspire Indiana Health program aims to improve early detection of pregnancy and identify women at high risk for preterm delivery. The program will also provide comprehensive access to prenatal care including early ultrasounds, nutrition and smoking cessation counseling, and screenings for HIV, Hepatitis C, and domestic violence. Aspire Indiana Health works in partnership with St. Vincent's Hospital in Madison County.

In addition, Aspire Indiana Health will provide an education program about safe sleeping practices for infants, home visiting programs to support at-risk women and newborns, measures to reduce teen pregnancies, and access to community resources aimed at improving healthcare, housing, employment, and education.

"A healthy baby starts with a healthy mommy. In addition to all of the initiatives outlined in our infant mortality prevention program, Aspire Indiana Health promotes optimal health for women in Madison County. We focus on taking care of all aspects of patient care, encouraging healthy habits and preventative care. Our program aims to significantly decrease healthcare issues before the pregnancy and allows the medical providers to focus on the pregnancy with intensive education and follow up needed to combat the infant mortality rate," said Syd Ehmke, Aspire Indiana Health's Vice President and Chief Operating Officer.

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