

Study Finds That Quality Improvement Model Helps Reduce Maternal Depression

According to a new study published in [PLOS ONE](#), home visiting (HV) programs that used a quality improvement collaborative model made strides in identifying maternal depression, referring clients for services, and alleviating clients' symptoms. Nationwide, HV programs are charged with addressing the [high rates of depression](#) experienced by the mothers they serve.

“Post-partum depression can create two generations of suffering,” says Mary Mackrain, MEd, of [Education Development Center \(EDC\)](#). “Our study provides a way forward for HV programs that are facing challenges in addressing maternal depression and holds promise to help programs more rapidly and effectively meet the needs of mothers and their infants.”

In the study, eight states that participated in the Home Visiting Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network ([HV CoIIN](#)) were supported in using Institute for Healthcare Improvement's Breakthrough Series to test evidence- and practice-informed changes that could lead to improved outcomes for maternal depression. Funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration and led by EDC, HV CoIIN supports home visiting programs in using quality improvement to identify, test, and refine strategies to better support HV clients.

HV CoIIN is the first national initiative to use quality improvement to accelerate improvements in HV programs. Findings from the study of its impact on maternal depression included:

- Depressive symptoms among women accessing services improved by nearly 10 percent.
- The number of women screened for depression increased by 13 percent.
- The number of women with positive depression screens who accessed evidence-based services increased by nearly 25 percent.

Not only are these findings important to improve outcomes in maternal depression, HV CoIIN has demonstrated that CQI and BTS collaborative methods can promote and rapidly spread the effective use of evidence-based practices which can be used to improve home visiting services and ultimately outcomes in a variety of public health issues.

Education Development Center (EDC) is a global nonprofit that advances lasting solutions to improve education, promote health, and expand economic opportunity. Since 1958, EDC has been a leader in designing, implementing, and evaluating powerful and innovative programs in more than 80 countries around the world.