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# Women's Health In Massachusetts Public Health Programs and Services

To address health concerns specific to women, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health carries out a broad range of activities. The numerous programs and services focus on health and well-being in the context of women's economic, occupational and social roles.

- **The Women's Health and Learning Center** is a comprehensive health education and counseling service for women incarcerated in Massachusetts correctional facilities. The Center offers counselling, workshops, and consultation in: women's health, with specific emphasis on minority women's health issues; parenting and mothering at a distance; substance abuse; support for battered women and survivors of sexual abuse; child health; and post-release issues. (For more information, call 617-727-0941.)

Projected Service Level: \* 1,000 women

- **The Women and Work Program** addresses a wide range of health and safety issues women face in their workplaces. It recognizes that traditional "women's work" and non-traditional jobs involve special health and safety concerns. Sex and racial discrimination, pay equity, day care, and reproductive health and work are the focus of Women and Work projects. The **Office Technology and Education Project** offers health and safety information to office workers on effects of automation on work, health problems related to office work and job design, and strategies for improving office health and safety. In addition, the Department's Women's Health Unit coordinated a statewide

**"Women in the Workplace" Conference** in November 1985, which brought together working women from every region of the state. (For more information, call 617-727-0941.)

Projected Service Level: 600 women

- **The Maternal and Infant Care (MIC) Program** provides comprehensive multi-disciplinary care to high-risk, low-income pregnant women through 22 projects located in high-need areas of the state as evidenced by high rates of neonatal mortality, low-birthweight births, insufficient prenatal care, lack of private health insurance and poverty. Medical care is provided as well as social services, nutrition counseling, health education, family planning and other preventive health services. (For more information, call 617-727-0941.)

Projected Service Level: 4,500 women

- The federal **Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)** provides specific nutritious foods, nutrition education and health care referrals for low-income pregnant and postpartum women, infants and children up to age five who are determined to be at nutritional risk. Special projects include a **Southeast Asian Refugee Project** and a **Breast-feeding Promotion Project**. (Statewide toll-free number: 1-800-WIC-1007.)

Projected Service Level: 63,000 women, infants and children

\*Projected Service Level is for State Fiscal Year 1986 (July 1, 1985 to June 30, 1986)

- **Specialized Pregnant and Parenting Adolescent Programs** are designed to ensure early identification of pregnant adolescents in order to provide them with educational and social services to meet their special needs. Prenatal, postpartum and infant care are coordinated with other service providers through this program. (For more information, call 617-727-0941.)

Projected Service Level: 1,500 pregnant and parenting adolescents

- A major objective of the **Reproductive Health Program** is to increase access to reproductive health services for women in Massachusetts. Through education, research and provision of services, the program addresses reproductive health issues and problems that affect women in each phase of the life cycle. Activities include: offering DES (diethylstilbestrol) screening clinics; providing public and professional education on reproductive health issues and problems; identifying and examining the reproductive health status, resources and services for women in Massachusetts, with particular attention to problems related to providing health care and resources for women from various cultures; and developing policy recommendations. (For more information, call 617-727-0941; DES statewide toll-free hotline, 1-800-422-6237.)

Projected Service Level: 1,000 women

- The **Pregnancy/Environmental Hotline** is a statewide toll-free number (1-800-322-5014) that provides information on the effects of hazardous substances and environmental pollutants on the health of pregnant women and their unborn children.

Projected Service Level: 3,000 pregnant women, partners, and health care professionals

- **Healthy Start**, subcontracted from the Department of Public Welfare, is a payor of last resort program for pregnant women who are ineligible for Medicaid, lack health insurance coverage for maternity care, and have incomes below 185% of the federal poverty line. The program covers prenatal, delivery, and postpartum care. A statewide toll-free number (1-800-531-BABY) has been established.

Projected Service Level: 2,000 uninsured women

- **Family Violence and Sexual Abuse Programs** provide services to rape survivors, their families and significant others, and offer preventive education projects designed to end violence against women. Throughout Massachusetts, a network of 16 state-funded rape crisis centers offer: 24-hour hotline services; information and referral; short-term counseling; interagency coordination with medical, law enforcement and criminal justice systems; and preventive education programs to schools, community groups and professionals. The **Resource Center for the Prevention of Family Violence and Sexual Abuse** is a statewide clearinghouse for family violence and sexual abuse information. (For more information, call 617-727-0941.)

Projected Service Level: 5,000 women and their families

- The Department has designated funds for **women's drug and alcohol programs and services**. Monies appropriated are earmarked for specialized outpatient and residential services for women. (For more information, call 617-727-8614.)

Projected Service Level: 17,000 women

- The Department also has developed several other special projects targeted toward promoting women's health. Among these are **training for health care providers on fetal alcohol syndrome and services to women who are refugees**. (For more information, call 617-727-0049.)

Projected Service Level: 3,100 women

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## Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**Michael S. Dukakis**  
Governor

**Philip W. Johnston**  
Secretary of Human Services

**Bailus Walker, Jr., Ph.D., M.P.H.**  
Commissioner of Public Health

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