



UK HealthCare

PATHways Receives Grant from March of Dimes to Expand Services

By **Jacqueline Schmidt** March 11, 2019

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PATHways team members

LEXINGTON, Ky. (March 11, 2019) – The **PATHways** program at **UK HealthCare's** Polk Dalton Clinic was awarded a grant from the March of Dimes to expand group prenatal education for pregnant

women with opioid use disorder in the medically assisted treatment (MAT) program.

PATHways currently provides services to about 50 women and more than 395 women have completed the program. Each week, approximately four new women begin treatment in the program which provides guidance and support to women in early recovery throughout pregnancy but also after delivery to help ensure a healthy lifestyle. After delivery, patients have the opportunity to go onto the next step of the program, the Beyond Birth Comprehensive Recovery Center which helps participants maintain the stability they achieved while in PATHways.

A new component of the program being funded in part by the \$20,000 grant is the opportunity to participate in more individual sessions of Jin Shin Jyutsu. The proven techniques of Jin Shin Jyutsu can potentially reduce anxiety and aid in the efforts to decrease or stop smoking. UK HealthCare's Jin Shin Jyutsu practitioner, Jennifer Bradley, demonstrates a holistic and partnered approach to care for this special population of women. Bradley is able to work with women in PATHways, providing them instruction on the use of this therapeutic technique with their newborns. The grant funds are also being used to provide training for social workers and nurses, to help practitioners working with women to develop stronger bonds with their infants. Sharon Hesselstine, president of Intentional Beginnings, will provide this training in May.

“We are very fortunate to have received this March of Dimes grant to help us expand these services,” said Diana Frankenburger, prenatal education coordinator for UK HealthCare. “We have always known women benefited from our groups but we began to realize that many women were missing crucial pieces. This grant will help us track participant completion and provides an incentive for women to do so. We hope to show further improved outcomes in the future.”

Studies have shown that for every prenatal group attended, women are 13 to 18 percent more likely to have appropriate drug screens at delivery. Historically, despite the education classes being offered, many women were unable to complete the educational program. The grant provides PATHways with a vehicle for the expansion of the current program which creates more opportunities and incentives for completion.

Through this program, participants participate in parenting classes, counseling, and DCBS case planning. The program aims to increase the number of women who maintain custody of their children

and provide them with the tools necessary to effectively parent. This grant will make better outcomes happen, and help these women create bonds with their babies, not only prenatally, but also after birth.

PATHways gives not only health care support, but peer support. The women in this program may not all be in the exact same circumstances, but they are in situations but they have a shared experience and want to have a bond with their newborns. The community at PATHways and Beyond Birth supports them through recovery.

"The University of Kentucky was one of the best places to receive this grant because one of March of Dime's main goals is to work with women with substance use disorders," Frankenberger said. "We were in the right place at the right time."

For more information about the program, grant or training opportunities contact Jason Joy at jason.joy@uky.edu.

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