

FIRST STEPS DATABASE

FAMILY PLANNING AT COMMUNITY SERVICE OFFICES

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The reduction of unintended pregnancy is a public health goal at both the state and national levels because substantial social consequences and costs are associated with unintended pregnancies. In Washington, during 1993-1994, approximately 69% of all births to poor women who received cash assistance and Medicaid were unintended at the time of conception. Because of the important role that providing increased access to family planning services can play in assisting low income people to achieve self-sufficiency, Washington mandates family planning assistance for clients in all Community Service Offices (CSOs) (RCW 74.12.400). The implementation of WorkFirst (Washington's public assistance-to-work program) in July 1997 brought about an explicit goal of zero additional births for women in WorkFirst and required family planning referral be a component of orientation/training for all Temporary Assistance to Needy Families clients.

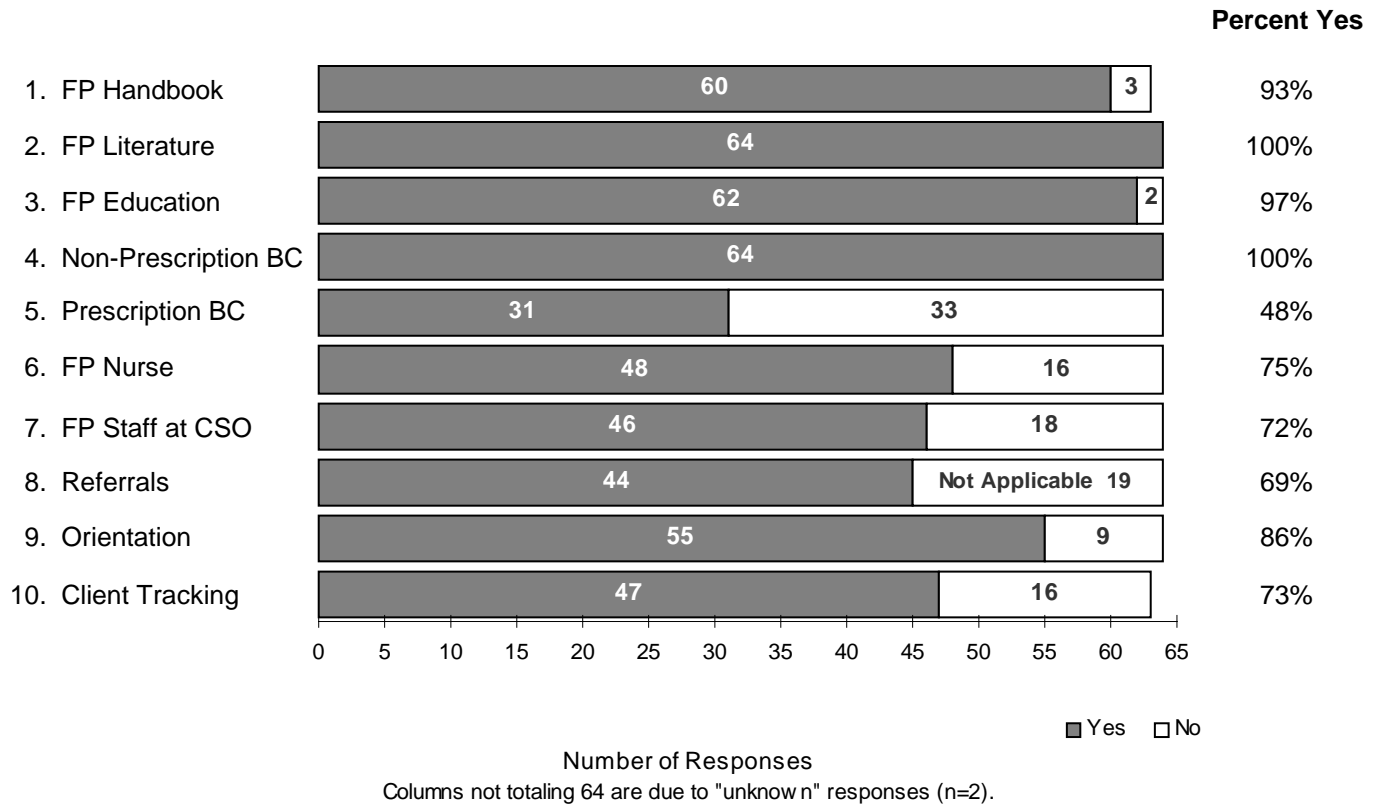
As part of an on-going effort of Medical Assistance Administration (MAA) to document and monitor the progress and success of the CSO-based family planning program, we conducted a self-report survey about the provision of basic family planning services in all of Washington's CSOs. This fact sheet reports the results of this survey. All 65 CSOs responded to the survey; no data are reported for the one specialized CSO where family planning services are not applicable. Nearly half (46%) of the e-mail survey respondents were CSO Administrators while a quarter (26%) of respondents were Social Services Supervisors. Nine responses were from administrative staff; three from Public Health Nurses; and two from Community Resource Program Managers. Four respondents were not identified by title.

Survey Questions

Please answer these questions by typing in yes, no, or don't know. (You may type in Y, N, or DK to designate yes, no, or don't know.)

1. Is there a copy of the MAA Family Planning Handbook at your CSO?
2. Is any printed birth control information (such as pamphlets, brochures, etc.) distributed ON SITE AT YOUR CSO?
3. Is any family planning education (such as answering questions, demonstration of birth control methods, etc.) provided ON SITE AT YOUR CSO?
4. Is any NON-PRESCRIPTION birth control (such as condoms, spermicides) available ON SITE AT YOUR CSO?
5. Is any PRESCRIPTION birth control (such as oral contraceptives, Depo Provera shots, etc.) available ON SITE AT YOUR CSO?
6. Is a family planning nurse ON SITE at your CSO at least once a week?
7. Is there a CSO employee who spends at least 20 hours per week on family planning at your CSO?
8. If family planning services are not provided ON SITE AT YOUR CSO, are clients being referred elsewhere for these services?
9. Has a family planning segment been integrated into your WorkFirst orientation?
10. Does your CSO have a client-based tracking system for family planning services provided AT YOUR CSO?
11. If yes, we are interested in knowing how you track clients using CSO-based family planning services. Please describe briefly your tracking process.

Findings



- Nearly all CSOs (93%) have the Medical Assistance Administration Family Planning Handbook on site.
- All CSOs have printed birth control information and non-prescription birth control available on site.
- Almost all CSOs (97%) offer family planning education for their clients.
- Some prescription birth control, including emergency contraception, is available at nearly half (48%) of CSOs.
- Three quarters (75%) of CSOs have a family planning nurse on site at least once a week.
- Nearly three quarters (72%) of CSOs have a staff member spending at least 20 hours per week on family planning.
- A great majority (86%) of CSOs have incorporated a family planning segment into their WorkFirst Orientation.
- Nearly three quarters (73%) of CSOs have some sort of client-based tracking system for family planning services.

Research and Data Analysis on behalf of MAA is currently visiting a number of Community Services Offices to explore useful strategies for providing family planning services at CSOs. This report will be available in July 1999.