


Improving Birth Outcomes: The Centering Louisiana Project

December 2019

Historically, Louisiana’s birth outcomes have been among the worst in the United States, with the state having the third-highest rates for preterm births and low birthweight babies in 2012.¹ Under the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation’s Strong Start Initiative for Mothers and Newborns, Elevance Health’s Public Policy Institute convened a grant project to improve care delivery and birth outcomes for women and babies in Louisiana.

Project Overview

The Centering Louisiana Project implemented the CenteringPregnancy® model, an evidence-based group prenatal care approach with proven results reducing preterm births and low birthweight babies. The program was led by a third-party administrator.²

 **Participants** 963 women who are Medicaid beneficiaries and at risk for poor birth outcomes.

 **Project Period** Women received services from February 2014 through December 2016.

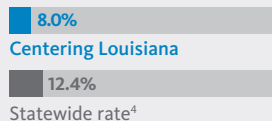
 **Locations** Seven participating provider sites across Louisiana.



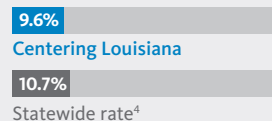
Results³

Achieved Positive Birth Outcomes

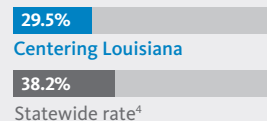
Preterm birth rate



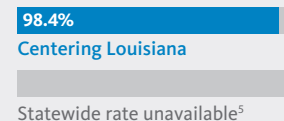
Low birthweight rate



C-section rate



Live birth rate



Attained High Participant Satisfaction and Quality

Very or extremely satisfied with prenatal care experience

97.8%

Very or extremely satisfied with delivery experience

91.4%

Received family planning counseling after delivery

91.5%

Initiated breastfeeding after delivery⁶

70.8%

Other Program Successes

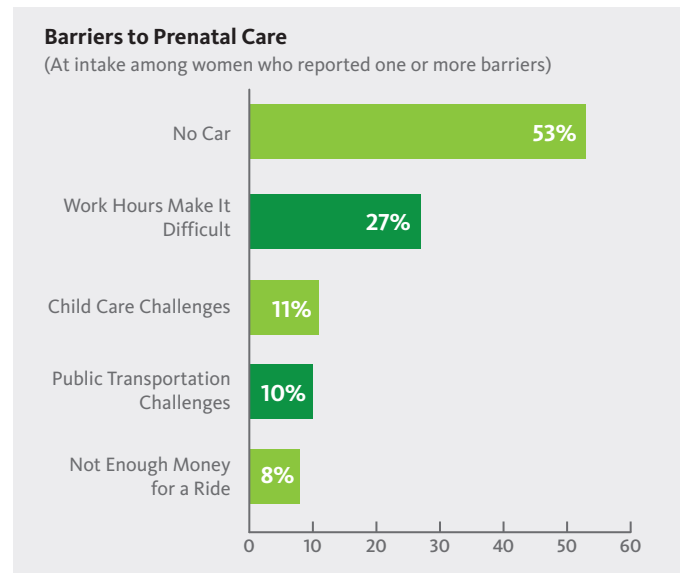
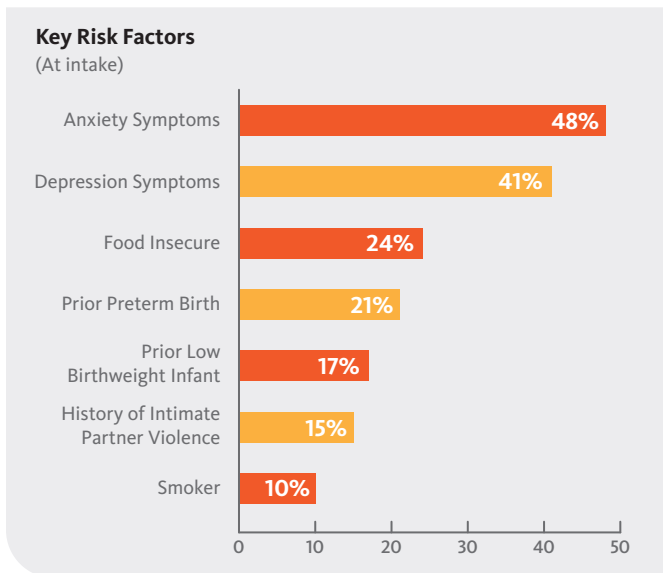
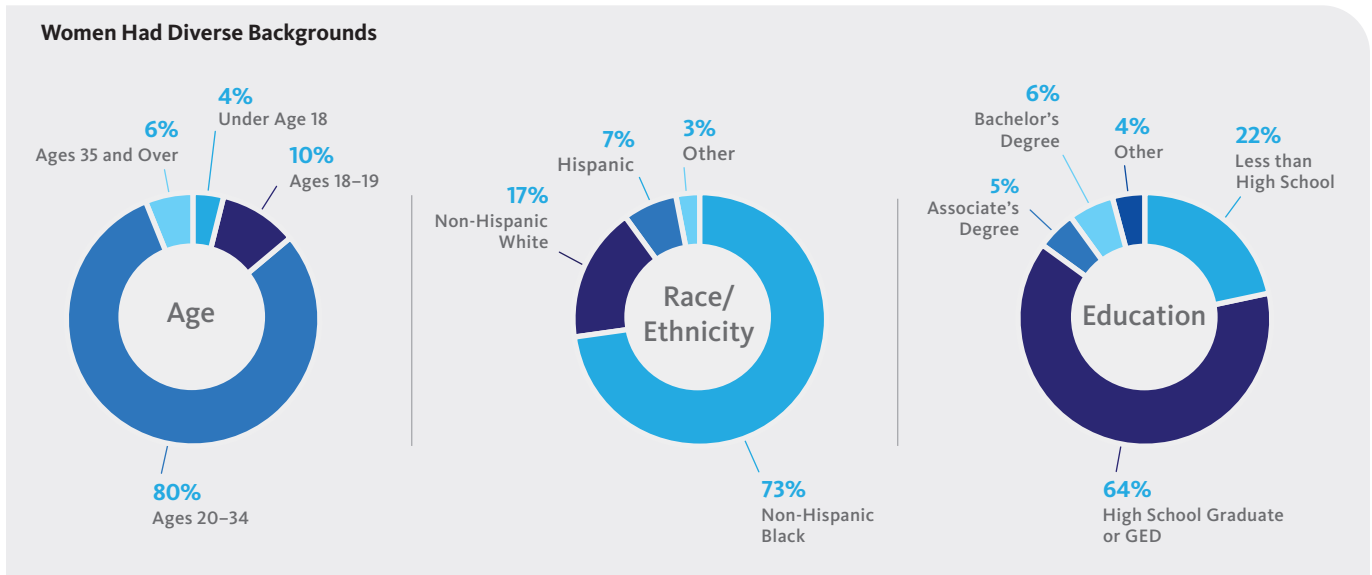
Achieved active engagement of mothers in their own healthcare and their support of other participants in group sessions.

Incorporated use of social media for recruitment, retention, and education.

Facilitated managed care organization support for enhanced reimbursement for group prenatal care.

Centering Louisiana helped lay the groundwork for sustainable changes to the delivery system across the state.

Participant Profile³



Acknowledgments

The Strong Start project in Louisiana was made possible by Grant #1D1CMS331143 from the Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. The contents of this publication are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or any of its agencies.

Endnotes

- ¹ Data from the Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Database. Retrieved August 15, 2019, from: <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#USA/2/27,28,29,30,31,32,34,33/char/0>.
- ² Elevance Health and its affiliated health plans did not receive any funding from this grant. Participation in Centering Louisiana was not limited to individuals enrolled in Elevance Health's affiliated health plan in Louisiana.
- ³ Strong Start project data from the final program evaluation for the Strong Start Initiative, published by CMMI's contracted evaluators. See: Hill, I., et al. (2018, October). Strong Start for Mothers and Newborns Evaluation: Year 5 Project Synthesis, Volume 1: Cross-Cutting Findings. Retrieved October 31, 2018, from: <https://downloads.cms.gov/files/cmml/strongstart-prenatal-finalevalrpt-v1.pdf>. See also: Hill, I., et al. (2018, October). Strong Start for Mothers and Newborns Evaluation: Year 5 Project Synthesis, Volume 2: Awardee-Specific Reports. Retrieved October 31, 2018, from: <https://downloads.cms.gov/files/cmml/strongstart-prenatal-finalevalrpt-v2.pdf>.
- ⁴ Data from March of Dimes Foundation. (2019). PeriStats. Retrieved April 5, 2019, from: <https://www.marchofdimes.org/peristats/Peristats.aspx>. Figures reflect a three-year average (2013-2015) for all populations. Birth outcomes vary by race/ethnicity, with African American women experiencing worse outcomes on measures such as preterm births (15.4% compared to 12.4% statewide) and low birthweight (15.2% compared to 10.7% statewide). Participants in the Centering Louisiana received services from February 2014 through December 2016.
- ⁵ Live birth rate represents the percent of live births to participants in the Centering Louisiana program compared to pregnancies that resulted in stillbirth, miscarriage, or termination. No comparable statewide rate exists for this outcome measure.
- ⁶ For comparison purposes, the Louisiana statewide ever-breastfed rate was 67%, based on births in 2015. Data from U.S. Breastfeeding Committee. (No date). Louisiana Breastfeeding Report. Retrieved August 21, 2019, from: <http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/d/do/2869>.