

BRIGHT LIGHTS AWARDS



2019

Spotlight Award

Trent Hills Family Health Team

Supporting families in rural area, for better care of their children from birth to school age



Nurses at the rural Trent Hills Family Health Team, experienced in women's health and childcare, realized that neither the hospital nor the primary care setting was providing the proper support for new mothers or the teaching many of them needed. The team's nurses created a new program for mothers that extends beyond the post-partum period until the children were ready for school and offers an opportunity for them to learn the numerous skills required to be parents, as well as a safe place to ask their questions.

The program offers support, continuity and more accessibility to mothers and babies in this rural community. Parents and their babies are now seen by the same provider and nurse for each visit and for a longer period, which allows trust to build and offers mothers a chance to discuss their concerns.

By taking charge of these visits, the nurses have also increased the availability of family physicians and Nurse Practitioners to see other patients with acute and chronic conditions. The program is also able to provide

breastfeeding support for this rural community. In addition, the program gives nurses the opportunity to work within their full scope of practice.

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Since the program began, the immunization rate has improved within the FHT. Staff also have noticed that children with specific needs get earlier referrals to outside specialists, leading to earlier interventions. It makes a big difference for a rapidly growing child.

The program continues to welcome new families and it monitors vaccination rates on an ongoing basis. Nurses continue to inform parents who refuse immunization about the benefits. The team has conducted a patient satisfaction survey and provides information about the program in the clinic's waiting room.

Staff are eager to share the program design and results with other primary care teams and clinics and have already made presentations about the program.

Key Facts:

- Program fills a gap in service
- Nurse-designed initiative
- Offers mothers guidance as they navigate motherhood
- Continuity: parents/babies seen by same provider
- Allows nurses to practice to full scope
- Increased immunization rates locally