



Department of Medicaid

John R. Kasich, Governor  
John B. McCarthy, Director

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Ohio Funding Four Projects in Toledo Area to Combat Infant Mortality**

*Collaborative efforts aim to improve birth outcomes and reduce the racial and ethnic disparities in infant mortality*

COLUMBUS – As part of the Kasich Administration’s efforts to combat infant mortality, the Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) has announced new investments in four community initiatives in Lucas County aimed at reducing infant mortality.

The [2014 Infant Mortality Data Report](#) from the Ohio Department of Health showed slight improvement in Ohio’s infant mortality rate, down from 7.4 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013 to 6.8 in 2014. However, Ohio’s rate – especially the black infant mortality rate – remains too high and exceeds the national average.

In Ohio Governor John R. Kasich’s last budget, Ohio allocated \$26.8 million over two years to support community-driven proposals to combat infant mortality at the local level and enhance coordination among various agencies that provide care for women and infants at risk. Together with its five contracted managed care plans, Ohio Medicaid has engaged local leaders in nine Ohio communities – Butler, Cuyahoga, Franklin, Hamilton, Lucas, Mahoning, Montgomery, Stark, and Summit counties – to identify innovative projects that will connect women and infants to quality health care and care management.

“This is a new approach to combatting infant mortality in Ohio,” said John McCarthy, state Medicaid director. “Rather than pursuing one-size-fits-all remedies that lack results, we are looking to initiatives that address the specific needs of individual communities.”

Through Toledo-Lucas County Getting to One (Pathways HUB), Ohio Medicaid awarded funding to support the following proposals:

- Care coordination agencies will train 12 full-time community health workers. They will reach out to 1,200 women in targeted communities to enroll in Pathways/Healthy Start to address social determinants of health and increase care connections.  
*Total Funding Amount: \$2,576,000*
- County health clinics, emergency departments, pediatric practices, and schools that serve women in high-risk communities will receive training to implement assessment and referral. A training and referral coordinator will be hired at the Northwest Ohio Pathways HUB to assign referrals to appropriate community health workers or resources.  
*Total Funding Amount: \$160,000*

- A project coordinator will be hired to address racism as a social determinant of health and will be located at the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department. The coordinator will offer training on cultural competencies and will also be responsible for community awareness and outreach and data collection.

*Total Funding Amount: \$384,000*

- Two new mental health counselors will be hired to focus specifically on the maternal population in targeted communities.

*Total Funding Amount: \$110,000*

Total Medicaid investment across the four projects is \$3,230,000.

The Ohio Department of Medicaid serves more than 3 million residents across Ohio. More than 80 percent of all Medicaid beneficiaries are served through the five contracted Medicaid managed care plans – Buckeye Health Plan, CareSource, Molina Healthcare, Paramount Advantage, and United Healthcare Community Plan.

More information on Medicaid managed care can be found [here](#).