

Colorado Substance Exposed Newborns Steering Committee

Vision for Colorado

The Colorado SEN Steering Committee envisions a Colorado where a decreasing number of women, children, and families are impacted by substance use during pregnancy and where those who are affected are identified and supported with the appropriate resources, practices, and policies in their communities and across the lifespan.

The Committee's Mission

The Colorado SEN Steering Committee is tasked with identifying and implementing strategies for reducing the number of families impacted by substance use during pregnancy and for improving outcomes for families across the lifespan.

2018-2020 Priority Area Work Groups

In the period beginning in 2018 and concluding at the end of 2020, the SEN Steering Committee will be convening, supporting, and guiding work groups to advance the six priority areas outlined below.

- **The Colorado Hospital SEN (CHoSEN) Collaborative** is working to increase consistency in implementation of best practice approaches in the identification of and response to newborns prenatally exposed to substances and their caregivers at the time of birth across Colorado—through education and formal quality improvement efforts.
- **The SEN Data and Research Work Group** is working to increase statewide data and research capacity in order to inform our work and to share successes and challenges.
- **The SEN FASD Identification Work Group** is working to assess the needs related to FASD identification capacity in the state and develop an expansion plan.
- **The SEN Plans of Safe Care Work Group** is working to promote community-based strategies to meeting the CAPTA/CARA requirement regarding plans of safe care for infants and caregivers.
- **The SEN Policy Work Group** is working to develop state policy priorities including access to treatment, barriers to engagement, SBIRT promotion, and other issues.
- **The SEN Provider Education Work Group** is working to expand provider education on related issues such as screening every pregnant woman with a validated screening tool in prenatal, hospital and postpartum settings.

To learn more about the SEN Steering Committee or to join a work group or the CHoSEN Collaborative, contact Jillian Adams at jadams@illuminatecolorado.org or 303-413-3460.

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History

The Colorado Substance Exposed Newborns (SEN) Steering Committee was established in 2008 and is a subcommittee of the Colorado Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force. The SEN Steering Committee exemplifies a collaborative approach to addressing community issues and continues to engage additional partners as appropriate to effectively address program targets.

The SEN Steering Committee has demonstrated significant success over the past several years in addressing substance use during pregnancy and substance exposed newborns. The committee developed the language for HB12-1100 and worked with partners and legislators to ensure its passage to protect drug screen and test results obtained through prenatal care from being used in criminal prosecution of a pregnant woman. The SEN Steering Committee has also published a recommendations document on prenatal substance exposure and held eight regional convenings to educate and support communities on this issue. The convenings involved more than 300 participants from nine different disciplines and resulted in the development of action steps based on locally identified needs. Recently, the SEN Steering Committee and the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Commission have merged to increase the impact of their collective work.

Beginning in 2015, the SEN Steering Committee coordinated the SEN Best Practices Hospital Learning Collaborative aimed to increase consistency in implementation of best practice approaches in the identification of and response to newborns prenatally exposed to substances at the time of birth across Colorado. Through this project, eight hospitals across five health systems partnered with Illuminate Colorado, the Colorado Department of Human Services, the Kempe Children's Center, and the Substance Abuse Trend & Response Task Force to address issues related to identification, referrals, and assessment of substance exposed newborns. In the fall of 2017, over 150 attendees participated in the SEN Summit, giving feedback on the top recommendations from the Hospital Learning Collaborative. Those recommendations laid the ground work for the SEN Steering Committee's 2018-2020 priority areas, which work groups of the committee are now moving forward.

Leadership and Support

The SEN Steering Committee is co-chaired by Kathryn Wells, MD, Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Colorado and Clinical Researcher at the Kempe Center and Jade Woodard, Executive Director of Illuminate Colorado. Jillian Adams, Program Manager at Illuminate Colorado, supports the SEN Steering Committee, the CHoSEN Collaborative, and all other work groups.