



Creating Partnerships for Hearing Screening for 1, 2- and 3-Year Old's: One Rural States Experience

Linda Hazard, Ed.D., CCC-A-Program Director
Stacy Jordan MA, CCC-A

Vermont Early Hearing Detection & Intervention (VTEHDI) Program and Educational Services Practice

Vermont Department of Health/University of
Vermont Medical Center (UVMHC)

Partnerships, Pilots and Programs

VTEHDI has a long history of community partnerships in newborn and early childhood hearing screenings.

We are going to share past and some on-going partnerships to meet existing and new screening goals set by HRSA.



Hearing Outreach Program (HOP) 1996-2010

- Hearing Outreach Program (HOP) 1996 hearing screening pilot that turned into a 13-site program whose final clinic location stopped in 2010.
 - 1 site pilot in 1996, eventually 13 sites state-wide (some sites multiple clinics a month)
 - Prior to Universal Newborn Hearing Screening in Vermont
 - Donated/free space, initial grant for pilot to cover audiology and equipment
 - Provided diagnostic OAE, pure tone screenings, otoscopy and tympanometry (grant money)
 - Started as birth-8 years of age, then birth-3, then birth-1 with identified risk factors (changed with funding requirements, audiology capacity)
 - Staff- audiologists (contracted) and support staff (state employees)
 - Title V funding, billed insurance, federal grant \$, state funding (newborn screening fees)

HOP ended clinics in 2010 when pediatric audiology capacity and other partnerships state-wide met hearing screening needs and various funding ended/changed.

Primary Care Provider Practices

- Primary Care Providers Practices became on of our partnerships in 2010 for newborn and early childhood screenings.
 - VTEHDI provides training, education, technical assistance, equipment, supplies, and at times direct services
 - Practices provide screenings to newborns (initial/ rescreen), children w/ risk factors and early childhood screenings through age 3 based on capacity or concern
 - Practices enter their newborn and early childhood results into our state registry
 - Initial equipment, supplies and annual calibrations covered by federal grants or practices
 - Still on-going with 10 practices in Vermont

Homebirth Midwives

Midwives became one of our partnerships in 2010 for newborn hearing screenings.

- VTEHDI provides training, education, technical assistance, equipment, supplies
- Initial equipment, supplies and annual calibrations covered by grants
- On-going partnership currently with 13 homebirth midwives.
- Midwives enter their hearing screening results directly into our state registry.



Early Childhood Hearing Outreach (ECHO)

- NCHAM and National Early Head Start Collaboration
- Early Childhood Hearing Outreach (ECHO) Initiative
 - NCHAM developed and implemented
 - Launched the ECHO Initiative in Vermont with our 4 Early Head Start/Head Start Programs in 2010
 - Supported all Early Head Start (EHS) programs to implement OAE screenings (training, equipment, case management, tracking)
 - EHS= birth-3 years of age; additional training and support for Head Start age group screenings (3-5) with established partnership
 - Equipment, supplies and annual calibrations covered by grants or programs
 - On-going collaboration with 5 EHS/HS in Vermont
 - Entry of screening results into the state registry requested

Additional Partnerships

- Educational Service Practice
 - Hearing screening provided to any child referred for an SLP evaluation
 - Equipment support from VTEHDI
 - Staff Audiologist/SLP

Children's Integrated Services Early Intervention (CIS-EI)

- Providing OAE screenings (birth-3)
- Equipment obtained through Building Bright Future Grant
- VTEHDI provides training and support
- Entry of screening results into the state registry requested
- Newer partnership and on-going

Challenges and Opportunities

A lot of early childhood hearing screenings are being provided in Vermont, but the number of pediatric audiologists is low in state and border states.

Many community partners report lack of follow up for hearing by families for various reasons:

- distance to audiology/ENT,
- transportation,
- wait times for appointments,
- lack of concern,
- work

Many partners report the time to screen/rescreen is a lot on their programs/practices

These challenges made us start thinking about opportunities and how our VTEHDI Program and staff can support our partners, families and children.

Once Upon a Time is Now

Once upon a time Vermont had state-wide pediatric hearing clinics and the time is now to reinvent a HOP clinic model to meet current needs.

VTEHDI director and program audiologist drafted a plan to pilot a HOP clinic under UVMHC

VTEHDI audiologist met with EHS Health Coordinators to propose, brainstorm and think of solutions

2 EHS programs requested to pilot a hearing clinic:

- Clinic was on-site at their programs
- Goal= reduce the # of children who need follow-up audiology appointments
- Audiologist provided services:
 - Otoscopy, tympanometry, diagnostic OAEs, screening OAEs, and pure tone screenings
 - Results and recommendations in writing
- EHS provided initial and/or follow up OAE screenings, obtained permission from families and assisted day of clinic
- EHS secured funding to pay for clinic time (on-site and travel)

What's Next?

Continue on-going partnerships with PCPs, EHS/HS, CIS-EI

Repeat clinics with existing 2 EHS/HS programs, possibly add others if they have funding

Provide additional training/in-service to EHS/HS staff and classroom staff

Consider requests from schools to help with or provide required screenings

Questions....



Linda.Hazard@partner.Vermont.gov

Director

Stacy.Jordan@partner.Vermont.gov

Coordinator/Audiology Follow-Up