**BACKGROUND**

Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Programs

- Nationwide expansion of home visiting
- Funded by USDHHS Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
- Prevention programs designed to improve outcomes for children by working with parents
- Services are voluntary and delivered in families’ homes
- States select from evidence-based models, based on needs and goals

**MIECHV Goals**

- Improve maternal and child health
- Prevent child abuse/neglect
- Promote child development and school readiness

**Home Visitor Turnover/Retention**

- Home visiting relies on relationships between home visitors and families
- Families may be at increased risk of dropping out of voluntary programs prematurely when their home visitor leaves

**Previous Research**

- Very few studies of staff retention in home visiting
- Services are voluntary and delivered in families’ homes
- Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)
- Home visitor job satisfaction can decline over time
- Turnover rates peak during times of program transition
- Very few studies of staff retention in home visiting
- Families may be at increased risk of dropping out of voluntary programs prematurely when their home visitor leaves

**Histories of Home Visitors (n=22)**

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**Qualitative Interviews**

- Semi-structured qualitative interviews conducted with all DC-MIECHV/home visitors employed in the Spring of 2018 (n=22)
- Interviews conducted in person in the home visitor’s preferred language (English conducted as interviews, F conducted in Spanish interviews)
- Interviews were audio-recorded and professionally transcribed by CastingWords

**Thematic Analysis**

- DF and TK developed an initial codebook using sensing concepts derived from previous theory
- L iter coded all transcripts using constant comparative method and added new codes as needed to capture emerging themes
- L selected illustrative quotes and examples to use in written materials

**RESULTS**

**CHALLENGES**

- Family Crises and Emergent Needs
  - Families, crisis, and stressful needs (e.g., housing instability, domestic violence) mean:
    - Changing scheduled visits
    - Re-prioritizing planned actions
    - Worrying about families
- Keeping Up with Administrative Requirements
  - Completing paperwork after visits
  - Feeling frustrated or disappointed about not being able to keep up with demands
- Thrust to Personal Safety
  - Some home visitors felt unsafe:
    - in the neighborhoods
    - in family homes, especially when families were experiencing domestic violence
- Feeling Isolated from the Field
  - Feeling of isolation, particularly during challenging situations with families
  - More frequent among home visitors who did not have organizational supports like warm hand offs for transitions from other home visitors

**SUPPORTS**

- Time Management, Stress Management, Self-care
  - Self-care is important to cope with stress
  - Time management skills developing over time
    - Feeling how to compartmentalize
    - Know how to call in support and how to know how to ask off day off
  - More often than not, managing time is a challenge
  - Family crises and stressful needs (e.g., housing instability, domestic violence) mean:
    - Changing scheduled visits
    - Re-prioritizing planned actions
    - Worrying about families

**IMPLICATIONS**

**Culture of Health and Wellness**

- Local implementing agencies have the opportunity to create a culture of health and wellness to support home visiting staff, including program managers and supervisors. This would include:
  - Caskall balancing
  - Professional development opportunities
  - Reflective supervision beyond administrative supervision for home visitors
  - Reflective supervision for supervisors as well
  - Providing time and space for peer connection
  - Providing physical space for paperwork and technology to facilitate paperwork completion

**Hiring Practices**

- Hiring practices present an ideal opportunity to optimize successful workforce selection
  - Include current home visitors in the hiring process
  - Balance experience with passion for the work
  - Learn about what an individual wants to get out of the job

**On Boarding and Orientation**

- An important time to ensure home visitors are prepared
  - Shadowing with experienced home visitors
  - Training before getting into the field on MIECHV and the model
  - Warm hand offs for transitions from other home visitors

**Re-framing Home Visitor Retention**

- Home visitors are often early career professionals using home visiting as an opportunity to gain experience
  - Use a team-based approach for caseloads, so families are connected with a team
  - Have opportunities for growth within an organization—senior home visitors, trainers, etc.
  - Offer part-time options for those wanting to go to college/graduate school

Reference:


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Acknowledgments: This study was supported by the District of Columbia Department of Health (DC-DOH) and was conducted under the auspices of the Department of Human Services (DC-DOH) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in accordance with the terms of a grant approved by the Department of Human Services (DC-DOH) and funded by the Department of Health (DC-DOH) under the auspices of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).